THE NEW
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A woman walks past fallen trees after Cyclone Mocha crashed ashore, in Kyauktaw in Myanmar's Rakhine state on Sunday | AFP

SUPER CYCLONE MOCHA BATTERS MYANMAR, B'DESH

Cyclone Mocha crashed through Myanmar and Southeastern Bangladesh on Sunday, sparing sprawling refugee camps but bringing a storm surge to swathes of western Myanmar where communications were largely cut off. Mocha made landfall between Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh and Myanmar's Sittwe, packing winds of up to 195 km per hour, in the biggest storm to hit the Bay of Bengal in over a decade.

PHASED IMPORT BAN ON 928 DEFENCE ITEMS TO PUSH 'AATMANIRBHARTA'

G20 भारत 2023 INDIA

सत्यमेव जयते
GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

JUBILANT JAMMU & KASHMIR

JAMMU & KASHMIR GETS READY TO HOST 3RD G20 TOURISM WORKING GROUP MEETING

Srinagar, J&K
22nd–24th May 2023

1.88 Cr
Tourist visits in last year (2022)

1310
Homestays registered with Department of Tourism Jammu & Kashmir

1st Rank
Conferred to Gurez Valley for best offbeat destination in India

300
New tourist destinations introduced to attract film-makers

75
New offbeat destinations introduced
New trekking routes identified

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्
ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

Issued by: Department of Information and Public Relations, J&K

ALMANAC TODAY
Monday: 15/05/2023 • Year: Shobhakruta • Ayana: Uttharayana
Ritu: Vasantha • Masa: Vaishakha • Paksha: Krishna • Tithi: Ekadasi 1.19 am
Nakshatra: Purvabhadra 9.48 am • Moon in Mesha Rashi • Rahukaala: 07.30 am to 09.00 am
Gulikakala: 01.30 pm to 03.00 pm • Yamaganda: 10.30 am to 12.00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 22°C | MAX 32°C
FORECAST
Showers late. Cloudy.
Sunrise 5.54 am
Sunset 6.37 pm
Moonrise 2.53 am
Moonset 2.53 pm

ALOK MOHAN TIPPED TO BE NEW DG&IGP

Major IPS shuffle on cards; Bengaluru may get a new chief

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

WITH the appointment of Director General & Inspector General of Police (DG&IGP) Praveen Sood as Director, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Karnataka will have a new Head of Police Force (HoPF) this week.

Director General of Police, Commandant General, Home Guards, Civil Defence, Director General, Fire & Emergency Services & State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Alok Mohan — the next seniormost IPS officer in Karnataka, of 1987 batch — is likely to be appointed DG&IGP, considering his seniority and service record.

According to informed sources, there will also be a change of guard in Bengaluru City Police. The incumbent Commissioner of Police & DGP Pratap Reddy of 1991 batch is likely to be posted out, following vacancies in the DGP post at either the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) or Home Guards, Civil Defence, in the event of Mohan being appointed HoPF.

"He is likely to be replaced by seniormost Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) and Special Commissioner, Traffic, Bengaluru, MA Saleem," said sources. Saleem belongs to the 1993 batch and is next in line for promotion to DGP rank because of vacancies arising with the movement of Sood. He would have been due for promotion in September this year, with the scheduled superannuation of DGP, Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement, P Ravindranath. There are, however, other officers of ADGP rank, who may be in the zone of consideration for the "most coveted" post of Bengaluru city commissioner.

Regarding the appointment of the next DG&IGP, the Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms (DP&AR) will send the names of senior IPS officers who have completed 30 years of service and have clean annual confidential reports (ACRs), to the Union Public Service Commission for empanelment.

The Commission will empanel three names from the list and send them back to the state, and the chief minister will appoint the state police chief from among the three officers.

Along with Mohan, the DP&AR is likely to send the names of DGPs Kamal Pant (Recruitment & Training, '90 batch), Pratap Reddy, Prashant Thakur (Lokayukta, '92 batch), ADGPs Saleem, Ramachandra Rao (Bangalore Metropolitan Task Force) and Malini Krishnamurthy (Internal Security Division) of 1993 batch, along with other senior officers.

There are likely to be some other transfers of officers holding important posts, including law and order and intelligence, added sources.

> He (incumbent Commissioner of Police & DGP Pratap Reddy) is likely to be replaced by seniormost Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) and Special Commissioner, Traffic, Bengaluru, MA Saleem — Official source

Sood's new role surprises many babus

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE appointment of DG&IGP Praveen Sood as CBI director has taken most bureaucrats in the state by surprise. Speaking on condition of anonymity, they said that with the change in the government, it was expected that some of the top police officers holding key posts, including the DG&IGP, would change, but the "suddenness" of Sood's appointment as CBI director has come as a "surprise" to all. This is the first time Sood will go to New Delhi for a central posting.

His name featured in the list comprising DGP Madhya Pradesh, Sudhir Saxena and Chief of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards. New Delhi, Taj Haasan, and was finalised on Saturday by the three-member appointment committee comprising PM Narendra Modi, Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, and Leader of the Opposition (Congress) in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury.

Chowdhury had reportedly objected to the procedure and demanded that the process be carried out afresh. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved Sood's appointment based on the panel's recommendation. The Department of Personnel & Training issued the appointment order on Sunday. Sood will assume charge on May 25, but before that he will have to be relieved by the Karnataka chief minister.

Delay by 5+ hrs leaves AI flyers in lurch

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

AN Air India flight from Bengaluru to Delhi had a delayed take-off by 5 hours and 30 minutes on Saturday causing enormous problems to the 150-plus passengers on it. In the absence of clear information, there was confusion and anger around. Air India's twitter handle cited "unavoidable operational issues" as the reason.

Flight AI 509 was supposed to depart at 7.15 pm, but finally left at 12.50 am on Sunday. Among the affected passengers was Abhishek Pandey, Director of Royal Bank of Scotland. He told *TNIE*, "There appears to be some issue with the incoming flight which was to take us to Delhi. We were all waiting to board but were told the flight has been delayed. There was just no clear information which would have allowed those wanting to cancel to do so. We were repeatedly given new timings and the flight finally took off at 12.50 am." Pandey said that Delhi Metro's underground would have taken just three minutes to reach his house in Sector 21 in Dwaraka. "Since Metro was closed when the flight landed, I had to wait 20 minutes for a cab and take another circuitous route to reach my house by road," he said.

Air India flyers wait to board at Bengaluru airport

Pandey added that some passengers were quite agitated and upset as this was a connecting flight. "They had planned to reach Delhi and take a flight to Canada or JFK Airport from there," he added.

CITY DRESSED UP
Gulmohar trees in full bloom provide some welcome shade in the scorching summer heat in Bengaluru | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Independents play spoilsport in city

AKNISREE KARTHIK @Bengaluru

ALL the independent candidates who contested from 28 assembly constituencies in Bengaluru lost their deposit of Rs 10,000, having failed to secure 1/6th of the total votes polled. In some constituencies, they played spoilsport.

In total, 918 independents contested in this assembly election, with 132 in the fray from 28 constituencies in Bengaluru. Shivajinagar had the highest number of independents -- nine had joined the race.

Interestingly, Jayanagar constituency, that witnessed a fierce fight between Congress candidate Sowmya Reddy and BJP candidate CK Ramamurthy, fell into the BJP's kitty with a winning margin of 16 votes, after several rounds of counting. There was an independent by the name 'Sowmya A Reddy' who secured 320 votes and another independent 'B Ramamurthy', who got 203 votes, who could have tilted the scales.

Congress rebel Yousuf Shariff, alias KGF Babu, spoiled the chances of official candidate RV Devaraj's win in Chickpet constituency. Even before the official Congress list was out and the model code of conduct came into force, KGF Babu was working in Chickpet and distributing freebies. Denied a Congress ticket, he contested as an independent and secured 20,931 votes. Devaraj got 45,186 votes and BJP candidate Uday Garudachar got 57,299 votes, winning by a margin of 12,113 votes. If KGF Babu had not contested as an independent, Congress workers maintain that their votes would not have split, and Devaraj could have won comfortably. Babu lost his deposit by over 500 votes.

Former minister and BJP rebel Krisshnaiah Setty put a spoke in the wheel for Gandhinagar candidate Sapthagiri Gowda, by netting 6,871 votes. Gowda lost to Dinesh Gundu Rao by just 105 votes. Setty, too, had started working in Gandhinagar constituency, and had distributed ration kits. Having failed to get the BJP ticket, he contested as an independent. BJP workers, who had expected to defeat Gundu Rao, blamed Setty for slicing into BJP votes, helping the Congress candidate.

Among the independents from Bengaluru, Jameel Ahmed who contested from Shivajinagar secured just 22 votes.

AUTHOR, ASPIRING POET AMONG RANKHOLDERS

DONNA EVA @Bengaluru

TWO of the ICSE and ISC rankholders this year are a cut above the rest of their peers. Not only did they excel in academics, they are also accomplished in their other interests like literature and writing poetry.

Akshaya Sutrave, the second rankholder in the state with 99.6 per cent in the Indian Certificate for Secondary Education (ICSE), is already a published author, having penned three books and a collection of short stories from when she was 15 years old.

"While I am still trying to map out what I want to do, I know that I'd like to pursue a double degree -- majoring in physics with a minor in literature. I've always been very interested in reading literature, and so, writing became a hobby. I'm currently working on a young adult series of five books, three of which I've already published," she said.

Akshaya self-published all of her books. "They have been viewed well, but I can definitely do more to market them better. I took a lot of inspiration from my favourite authors -- J K Rowling and Rick Riordan. Apart from that, my interest in physics also came from an interest in learning fun facts. I would constantly read encyclopedias," she said.

For Indian School Certificate (ISC) first rank holder Sebanti Hui, poetry is a passion. "I enjoy poetry very much and have written a fair bit, though it is more of a passion project. I enjoy the works of Osamu Dazai, Arthur Miller and D H Lawrence, though my love is more for poetry. I'm a huge fan of Robert Browning," she said. Sebanti hopes to study English (Honours) and pursue a career as a literature professor.

Boys shine in ICSE, girls in ISC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In ISC, there were three first-rank holders with a score of 99.25%, three second rank holders with 99% each and two third rank holders with 98.75% each.

The first rank holders were Anandita David from Mallya Aditi International School, Sebanti Hui from Greenwood High and Dirisinala Sri Sai Akshaya from Christ Academy ICSE School.

Sebanti said she tried not to overburden herself while studying. "I had chalked out a timetable. Depending on the subject and what lessons I wanted to cover for the day, I would spend around 8-10 hours a day studying. I tried not to go over 10 hours, because I know my brain has its limits," she said. She hopes to pursue a career in academics and become a professor.

Unlike in the CBSE and SSLC exams, where girls scored much higher than boys, in ISC and ICSE exams, it was divided.

All the top seven ISC rank holders are girls, except one boy. However in ICSE, of the 26 rank holders, 12 are girls and 14 are boys.

EXPRESS READ

BIC panel discussion on digital archiving

The Bengaluru International Centre is creating a digital archive of books, research papers and manuscripts that will be made available in public domain. To discuss the process of digitisation and archiving, Indian copyright law and how enthusiasts can support the initiative, the institution will host a panel discussion in Domlur at 4 pm on Friday. People can sign up at: https://bangaloreinternationalcentre.org/ ENS

5-km walkathon celebrates motherhood

To celebrate Mothers' Day, more than 300 people came together for a 5-km walkathon on Sunday. The event was organised by Motherhood Hospital, HRBR Layout. Dr Manjula Patil, Senior Consultant Obstetrician, Gynaecologist and Laparoscopic Surgeon, Motherhood Hospitals, said, "It is extremely important to remind ourselves of our responsibilities towards our mothers, we owe it to them." ENS

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

15TH May : I was reminded again recently of the time a few years ago when I was out checking on the stars, and three orange lights appeared in the distance and flew over me totally silently at a height of about fifty feet. It was quite a shock, I can tell you! It was some time before I worked out that it was probably birds reflecting the city lights with an unusual luminosity - and not space aliens!

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
This is one of those precious times when you can extract promises, guarantees and offers of financial assistance. If speculation is your game, you'll be on top form just as soon as you've figured out the facts. An emotional gamble may also pay off - but only if you've calculated the odds!

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
Today's sparkling Mercury-Venus partnership is an excellent indication of financial success, and indeed of correct decisions in every field. You are especially favoured if large domestic expenditure is underway. If you're in the housing market, have hope in your heart.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Your first step in the right direction is to square awkward issues with loved ones. If you wish to declare your desires, or tell someone how you feel about them, there is no time so good as the present. Once in a while, you are able to soar to poetic heights. Find the right words - and do it!

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
What else can be said except that you are a financial genius? Before you go wild though, this wonderful state of affairs only holds true for a short while, so do your best to pick up whatever bargains you can today. But it could be emotional gains you're looking at, rather than financial.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
Teamwork seems to be very important, but then isn't it always? But this time I am talking about genuine co-operation, in which you really do sit down and find out what other people want, and then do your best to fit in! Your role could be to open your more stuffy friends' eyes to new options.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
Your secret fantasy life has been growing ever stronger, which is probably a very good thing indeed. You see, today's strange imaginings will become tomorrow's reality, so dream on. Also, accept any responsibility at work very willingly. It might seem like a burden now, but could bring hidden bounties.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
Now you should be able to enjoy the company of people who once seemed to be so remote or unapproachable. Also, when looking at family connections, it seems to be long-distance links which are most important. In fact, this could be a time to build bridges.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
There is one last minor fracas waiting at work, or in some public area, but not just yet. I'm telling you this now so that you can continue to maintain your position and take elementary precautions as far as certain people are concerned. If you avert a problem, then your reputation will shoot up.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
Something that occurred towards the end of last week should have made it blatantly apparent that someone has been wasting your time. Don't blame them, though, for the fault lies elsewhere. What I really mean by that is that people who get it wrong may have been caught out by changing circumstances.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
The Sun is a neutral sort of a star, symbolically speaking, but is now making a helpful aspect to Uranus, a difficult planet. The inescapable conclusion is that you can now transform a problem into a great boon. But do you have the required concentration? I hope so!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
It is time to buy chocolates, send flowers and write love letters. In other words, the moment has come for totally traditional declarations of your feelings. When dealing with money, concentrate on giving rather than spending. Don't worry - you should get it back, probably in kind.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
Nothing will be finalised until the end of the month, but there's no reason why delay should be a problem. Actually, it could work to your advantage to get certain responsibilities and chores out of the way before returning to the fray and completing your goals.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle ⬇

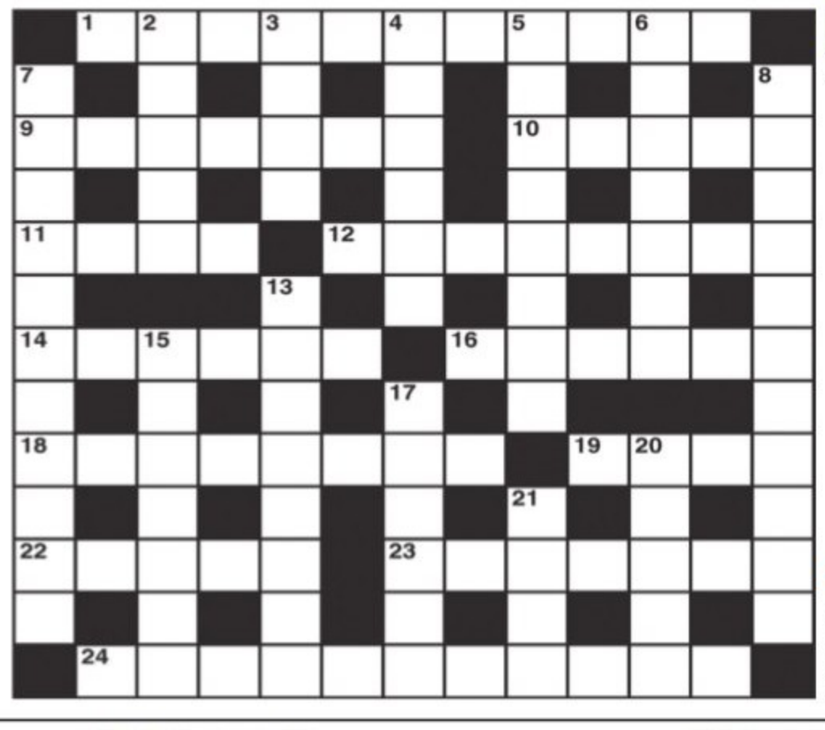
		2			5			
			9			4	1	6
				1		2	9	5
	3			8		9	6	7
	4		3	9	6		5	
9	6	5		7			8	
7	2	6		5				
3	5	9			7			
			6			5		

7	9	8	1	6	5	3	2	4
4	6	5	7	2	3	1	8	9
2	3	1	8	4	9	5	7	6
5	2	9	4	7	8	6	3	1
3	4	7	5	1	6	8	9	2
1	8	6	9	3	2	4	5	7
6	7	2	3	5	4	9	1	8
9	5	4	2	8	1	7	6	3
8	1	3	6	9	7	2	4	5

SUDOKU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 One of minor concern to the legal profession (4,2,5)
9 Time for settling scores? (7)
10 He noted regal variations (5)
11 Son of Adam said to sound archaic (4)
12 Some feedback from fashion creation (8)
14 Military area needs rest CO ordered (6)
16 Rough-edged sort of dagger (6)
18 Secret keeping boy on toes perhaps (8)
19 Bail out in the Indian Ocean (4)
22 This dance can go wild (5)
23 Course for a fool turned philosopher (7)
24 A scheming woman coming with devious ruses (11)

DOWN
2 In skill the French sentry should be (5)
3 One who can't even put a washer on a faulty tap? (4)
4 Goes if upset by old-fashioned people (6)
5 Above all it's meant to keep you warm (8)
6 Tackle some vote manipulating (7)
7 Doggedness is derived from its presence (11)
8 His skill may carry some weight on board (5,6)
13 House completed but not bought (4-4)
15 Rejoice over Edward having become king (7)
17 Inferior saucepan (3-3)
20 Gather it's what people may go to church for (5)
21 One making sure he doesn't waste a thing (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Railed, 4 Counties, 9 Tithes, 10 Stripped, 12 Logs, 13 Creel, 14 Flat, 17 Standing army, 20 Close pursuit, 23 Tots, 24 Units, 25 Stem, 28 Travesty, 29 Marine, 30 Chessman, 31 Meagre.

Down: 1 Ruthless, 2 Integral, 3 Eyes, 5 On the warpath, 6 Nail, 7 Impels, 8 Sedate, 11 Frank Sinatra, 15 Idols, 16 Smart, 18 Hurtling, 19 Stampede, 21 Static, 22 Strafe, 26 Keys, 27 Fame.

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

DLREE
RNTOS
GAGEEN
GHLAEG

At least we don't have to cut the fairways.
Well, the fairways may be dry, but the golfers will have no problem putting.
3/17
EVEN DURING A DROUGHT, THE GOLF COURSE'S SPRINKLER SYSTEM COULD KEEP THE ---
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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: ZESTY OFFER ZODIAC ORIGIN
Answer: If there was a science about the study of effervescence, it would be — "FIZZICS"

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REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE

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PHASED IMPORT BAN ON 928 DEFENCE ITEMS TO PUSH 'AATMANIRBHARTA'

The defence ministry has approved a fresh list of 928 components and subsystems, which will now be procured only from the domestic industry

FOURTH POSITIVE INDIGENISATION LIST

It is the fourth such "positive indigenisation list (PIL)" comprising line replacement units, sub-systems and components used for various military platforms, equipment and weapons. The defence ministry said on Sunday that the move is in sync with the Central government's overall aim to promote Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance) in defence production

FOREIGN PURCHASES TO END BY DEC 2028

- The defence ministry has set specific timelines for import ban of the items, spanning the period from December 2023 to December 2028
- This list is in continuation to the three similar PILs that were brought out in December 2021, March 2022 and August 2022. "These lists contain 2,500 items which are already indigenised," the ministry said | **P7**

₹715 cr

THE IMPORT SUBSTITUTION VALUE OF THE ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE NEW LIST

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

CONGRESS TOP BRASS TO DECIDE NEW CM

All 135 new MLAs vote through secret ballot at CLP meet; observers to give report to Kharge

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

A day after Congress registered a thumping victory at the Assembly polls with 135 seats in the 224-member House, the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) on Sunday evening unanimously resolved to authorise AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge to appoint the new chief minister for Karnataka. Former CM Siddaramaiah and KPCC president DK Shivakumar are the main contenders to the top post.

The AICC chief, who flew to New Delhi on Sunday morning, deputed former Maharashtra chief minister Sushilkumar Shinde, AICC General Secretary Jitendra Singh and former AICC general secretary Deepak Babaria as observers for the election of CLP leader.

As Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar camps held their ground demanding that their respective leader be made the chief minister, the three observers, along with AICC general secretaries Randeep Singh Surjewala and KC Venugopal, held separate discussions with the two leaders for about 30 minutes. While the meeting was on at a private hotel on Palace Road, supporters of both the leaders resorted to sloganeering in support of their leaders.

KPCC president DK Shivakumar, flanked by CLP leader Siddaramaiah and senior leader BK Hariprasad (on his right), and former Union minister Sushilkumar Shinde (on his extreme left), addresses newly elected legislators at a hotel in Bengaluru on Sunday.

Sources privy to the CLP meet said Shivakumar preferred the party high command to decide on the chief minister, while Siddaramaiah insisted on going by the opinion of the newly elected MLAs and getting that approved by the party high command. Siddaramaiah later moved a resolution authorising the AICC president to appoint the new CLP leader. The resolution was supported by Shivakumar and all the newly-elected MLAs, and CLP unanimously resolved to authorise Kharge to appoint the new chief minister.

All the 135 newly-elected Congress MLAs were asked to vote their choice of chief ministerial candidate through a secret ballot late in the night, even as Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar are the frontrunners for the top post. The voting was in progress when this paper went to press.

The three observers will submit a consolidated report along with the results of the secret ballot to Kharge on Monday. A final decision is expected to be taken after the party high command studies the report and MLAs' votes before holding talks with both the CM contenders.

Earlier in the day, Siddaramaiah met Kharge before the latter left for New Delhi and conveyed a clear message that he was a strong contender for the CM's post. **P4**

BJP MAY SCOUT FOR NEW TOP ORDER

After its humiliating defeat in the recent Assembly polls, the BJP is likely to replace its state president Nalin Kumar Kateel. Also, sources said a "strong leader" may be appointed as Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly to take on the Congress. **P4**

Vokkaliga seers back DKS for chief minister

CHETAN MG @ Bengaluru

PROMINENT Vokkaliga seers have demanded that the Congress leadership announce KPCC president DK Shivakumar as the next chief minister.

Hours before the CLP meeting on Sunday evening, the Vokkaligara Sangha convened a meeting to prevail upon the Congress leadership to announce Shivakumar as CM. Prominent seers of the community -- Nirmalananda Natha Swami of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mutt and Nanjavadhoota Swami of Spatikapuri Mutt – took part in the meeting and said Congress has a tradition of making KPCC president the CM and the party should pick Shivakumar.

Nirmalananda Natha Swami said Shivakumar's dedication helped Congress win the polls in a big way and the party should consider the sacrifices he made and the pain he underwent for being a committed and loyal worker of the party. "We appeal to Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge and Siddaramaiah to give Shivakumar a chance to serve the people," he said. **P4**

Praveen Sood picked as next CBI director

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA Director General & Inspector of Police (DG&IGP) Praveen Sood is the next director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) on May 14 (Sunday) issued the order, confirming his appointment as the "Director, CBI for a period of two years from the date of assumption of charge of the office."

Sood will take charge on May 25 from his predecessor, the outgoing CBI Director Subodh Kumar Jaiswal, whose term ends on the date. On receiving the order, Sood told TNIE that he remains committed to the logo of the CBI, India's premier investigating agency, on industry, impartiality and integrity. He refused to comment further.

Praveen Sood

Sood's name was finalised on Saturday by the three-member appointment committee comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Leader of the Opposition (Congress) in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury. Soon after, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved his appointment based on the panel's recommendation. Besides Sood, the names of Sudhir Saxena (DGP, Madhya Pradesh) and Taj Haasan (chief of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards, New Delhi) were also proposed in the list of the next CBI director.

Sood is the senior-most Indian Police Service (IPS) officer in the country belonging to the 1986 batch. He is the third IPS officer from Karnataka cadre to be appointed as CBI director after Joginder Singh (July 31, 1996-June 30, 1997) and DR Karthikeyan (January 31, 1998-March 31, 1998).

Sood belongs to Himachal Pradesh. He was appointed DG&IGP, Karnataka on February 1, 2020 and was due for superannuation in May, 2024. Being an alumnus of IIT-Delhi and IIM Bangalore, he is known to incorporate technology in old school policing to make it more effective in handling new age crimes, law and order challenges and rendering easy access to police services for the common man. His contribution in using technology to ease Bengaluru's infamous traffic snarls is well known. Sood had efficiently and empathetically handled the Covid-19 crises in Karnataka, especially among the police force.

ALOK MOHAN COULD BE NEXT DG&IGP

With the appointment of DG&IGP Praveen Sood as CBI director, Karnataka will have a new Head of Police Force (HoPF) this week. Director General of Police, Commandant General, Home guards, Civil Defence, Director General, Fire & Emergency Services & State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Alok Mohan, the next senior-most IPS officer in Karnataka, of 1987 batch, is likely to be appointed as the DG&IGP considering his seniority and service record. According to sources, there will also be a change of guard in the Bengaluru city police. **P2**

Pakistan beefs up Creek infra; India's work stonewalled

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

WHILE Pakistan's Marines are busy strengthening their defences and associated infrastructure in the strategically important Sir Creek area of Gujarat, the Border Security Force (BSF) has put its construction activities on hold since February last. Tensions between the forces of the two countries across the Creek haven't been dialed down yet.

"A 64-men barrack is under construction at Pak marine post Rah-de-Pir. This is in addition to the Pakistan Marines deploying a tent post opposite G-pillar 22," a source said.

The Pakistan side is also deploying quadcopters to monitor activities of the BSF and is using civilian boats to transport construction material from Shahbhandar to Rah-de-Pir for strengthening their defences, added sources.

In contrast, "while Maurya Bet (earlier term Samudra Bet) is held by the BSF, construction has been stopped since February," they said.

As first reported by this newspaper, tension had been brewing since February in Sir Creek following Pakistan's aggressive posturing. In response, the BSF deployed resources in commensurate strength.

It all began as BSF troops on the ground were working on improving their habitat to which the Pakistan Marines objected and later mobilised their resources.

The Pakistani Marines not only objected but also mobilised their fast attack crafts and boats aggressively. During the incident, "local commanders responded befittingly and mobilised their matching resources," sources said.

There have been proposals to beef up the BSF's operational capabilities in the area. The Union home ministry had approved ₹50 crore for building eight multi-storeyed bunkers-cum-observation posts to ward off the infiltration of Pakistani fishermen and fishing boats.

EXPRESS READ

Imran Khan may appear before Lahore HC today

Lahore: Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan is likely to appear before the Lahore High Court on Monday in the cases registered against him for torching the house of the Corps Commander here and other incidents of violence erupted after his arrest last week. **P9**

10 dead after drinking hooch in Tamil Nadu

Chennai: Ten people, including a septuagenarian woman, have died in Marakkanam and Maduranthakam allegedly after consuming hooch. As a result, seven police personnel in Villupuram and Chengalpattu districts were placed under suspension on Sunday. **P5**

ROYALS ROAST ROYALS

Royal Challengers Bangalore players celebrate after winning their IPL match against Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur on Sunday. RCB set a lowly target of 172, and bowled out the Royals for 59 in 10.3 overs | AFP | **P11**

Manipur CM arrives in Delhi, to meet Shah

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

MANIPUR CM N Biren Singh on Sunday landed in New Delhi after being summoned by the BJP's central leadership for consultations. Ministers Thongam Biswajit Singh, Govindas Konthoujam, Y Khemchand, Th Basantakumar and BJP state president A Sharda Devi accompanied him.

They are likely to meet Union home minister Amit Shah and the BJP national president J P Nadda. This would be their first meeting since ethnic clashes between Meiteis and Kukis broke out in Manipur on May 3. The unrest was against a proposal to include Meiteis — the state's largest community — in the Scheduled Tribes list.

The BJP's central leadership delayed the meeting with Singh in view of the Karnataka elections.

ICSE, ISC results come out, all rank holders, except one, from Bengaluru

DONNA EVA @ Bengaluru

THREE days after CBSE results were announced for Grades 10 and 12, the results of Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) and Indian School Certificate (ISC) exams were out on Sunday afternoon.

In the state-wise category, in Karnataka, the top three rank holders were from Bengaluru and Shivamogga. The highest score by any student was 99.8% in ICSE (Grade 10) and 99.75% in ISC (Grade 12).

In the region-wise category, South India ranked second with a pass percentage of 99.69 after western India with 99.81%.

The Council For Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) that released the results said 26 students got the first, second and third ranks in ICSE and eight students in ISC. Annanya Karthik, who scored 99.8%, is the top rank holder of Karnataka in ICSE. Akshaya Sutrave and Anondee Saha, who both scored 99.6%, shared the second rank. In all, 23 students with identical scores of 99.4% shared the third rank.

(From left) Sebanti Hui, Anondee Saha, and Akshaya Sutrave

Mayur M Gowda from St Joseph's Aksharadhama School in Shivamogga was the only non- Bengalurean who secured a spot in the top three ranks.

Akshaya Sutrave, a student of VIBGYOR High, told The New Indian Express that she wants to pursue a career in astrophysics. "The month prior to our examinations really helped. I used to start studying around 11 am and used to take small breaks in between. The question papers were pretty balanced. In fact, they were easier than the pre-board question papers," she said.

Anondee Saha, another second rank holder, said she started overthinking about her performance in some of the exams. "But I knew that the amount of hours I had put in for studying would bring me good results. I was thrilled when I got the results and pleasantly surprised to find my name in the merit list," she said. **P2**

'WILL FIGHT INJUSTICE' Sowmya Reddy of Congress, who lost from Jayanagar to BJP candidate CK Ramamurthy by a margin of 16 votes after multiple rounds of recounting, said that she will fight the injustice and sought support of people. Taking to social media, she said, "I plead your continued support to fight this injustice of foul play in Jayanagar elections."

K'TAKA BJP STARES AT CHANGE OF GUARD

● Kateel likely to be replaced ● Party in no mood to experiment with LS polls a year away ● Bommai may not be LOP

ASHWINI M SRIPAD
@ Bengaluru

AFTER its humiliating defeat in the recent Karnataka Assembly elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party is likely to replace its state president Nalin Kumar Kateel. Also, informed sources told *The New Indian Express* that a "strong leader" is likely to be appointed as the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly to take on the Congress that won in 135 constituencies.

The BJP, which was confident of crossing the halfway mark, won just 66 seats.

BJP sources said that ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the party is in no mood for any new experiment. A senior BJP leader told *TNIE* that Kateel will resign on his own or will be asked to quit as BP state chief.

"Kateel's performance as BJP state president is unsatisfactory. Party leaders in Delhi are in mood to replace him," the BJP leader added.

Kateel's tenure as party state chief ended in 2022. However, the Dakshina Kannada MP was given an extension ahead of the Assembly polls. Kateel is backed by BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) BL Santhosh.

Sources said Basavaraj Bommai, who resigned as chief minister on Saturday, is unlikely to get the coveted Leader of Opposition post. "Congress has 135 MLAs. We need a strong Opposition leader to take on the government, both inside and outside the House. We have just one year for the General Elections and there is a pressure on the Karnataka unit to win at least 20 seats... for this we need a strong leader in the party as well as in the House," a BJP leader said.

Meanwhile, Bommai said that they held a meeting with party leaders, including Kateel and other MLAs on Sunday to discuss the results. "We collected details from various regions about our performance. We decided to do a complete analysis on the results across the state. Along with this, we will also do constituency-wise analysis. Though our vote share remains the same, we have got fewer seats. We will also call a separate meeting with elected representatives in the next 4-5 days and also with candidates who lost the polls," Bommai told the media.

On Kateel's future post in the party, Bommai said there is no question of the former resigning. "We are not working only keeping elections in mind... we work beyond that. We will take our programmes and schemes to people. We will rebuild the party and strengthen it. This is a continuous process. In the 2013 assembly polls, BJP got 40 seats... but in 2014 Lok Sabha polls, we got 19. We will start preparing now for the 2024 General Elections. We will accept defeat with humbleness... we will rectify the issues and march forward," he said.

The outgoing Chief Minister also said this should not be termed as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's loss. "Modi belongs to the entire nation and he had come for Karnataka for campaigning," Bommai said. He also reminded that the Congress has lost in several Assembly elections across the country in the recent past.

POLITICS ASIDE, IT IS TIME TO DELIVER

THE fiercely fought election to Karnataka Assembly, which caught national attention, is over. The Congress, that highlighted the shortcomings in the system and assured people of ushering Karnataka on to a new path of development, has got an absolute majority to govern the state for the next five years. It has now set in motion the process to elect a new chief minister. Given the political ambitions of leaders who worked for the party's victory, it may take a few days for it to put in place a full-fledged government.

Once the government formation process is over, Congress should get cracking to deliver on its promises. Effectively implementing its five guarantees made to people during electioneering will be among the big challenges before the new government.

As Congress is keen to keep up its winning momentum till the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, it cannot afford to err or delay on implementing the welfare programmes, besides fast-tracking development works to show a visible change in the governance.

That could perhaps help portray the 'Karnataka Model' of governance in the high-stakes polls later this year in other states as well as in the Lok Sabha polls.

On the flip side, failure to do so can give credence to BJP's allegations over Congress' failures in Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh. The government's commitment and ability will be put to the test within a year during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Two hundred units of free electricity per month to every household; Rs 2,000 per month to every woman head of in households; Rs 3,000 per month to unemployed graduates; Rs 1,500 per month to unemployed diploma holders; 10 kg rice per person per month to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families; and free transportation facility for women in state transport corporation buses are the five guarantees given to people.

Guarantee cards were distributed to people and top party leaders, including AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, assured that they will be implemented in the first cabinet. The party's strategy to announce the poll guarantees also played a big role in winning 135 of the 224 seats.

In a welfare state, the governments have to take up welfare programmes, but the big question is how effectively they are implemented.

Congress can count on its leaders, who have political acumen and experience in implementing welfare programmes. The real challenge is to keep their promise to root out corruption. The '40 % corruption' allegations against the BJP government was one of the major poll planks that helped Congress set a narrative against the BJP and build momentum in its favour even before elections were announced. The BJP attempted to counter, but failed to negate the charges of corruption and governance-deficit, ending up paying a heavy price in the elections.

While the focus should shift to governance that has taken a backseat over several months when the state got into the election mode, the Congress government in the state and the BJP government at the Centre should also work like "double-engine" governments in the best interests of the people of the state.

Leaving aside the statements made in the heat of electioneering, it would do well for the BJP government at the Centre to fully extend its cooperation to the State Government in terms of allocation of funds and the Congress government should not make any distinction between the Central and state schemes.

At the end of the day, all schemes and programmes are meant for the people of the state. It does not matter whether they are Centre- or state-sponsored programmes, as they are all funded by people who are the ultimate beneficiaries.

Former CM Siddaramaiah and State Congress president DK Shivakumar — who worked as Congress' "double-engines" to propel the party to power — will now have to show the same zeal and enthusiasm for the development of the state, keeping politics aside.

Post in new govt or LS ticket: What next for Shettar?

AMIT S UPADHYE @ Hubballi

FORMER chief minister and Congress leader **Jagadish Shettar,** who lost the Hubballi-Dharwad Central constituency against BJP, has left for Bengaluru on Sunday giving rise to speculation on whether the Congress has offered him any post.

There are murmurs in political corridors that Shettar could be offered a high post in the new government and if he denies the offer, he will be requested to work to build the Congress in the state.

Being a tall Lingayat leader, it is said that the Congress wants to continue its bond with Shettar who joined the party only last month quitting BJP.

Shettar, however, has denied any such possibility and said that there has been no such offer from the Congress. "As a senior leader of the party, it is my duty to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new government. Hence I decided to come to Bengaluru," he told The New Indian Express.

A close aide of Shettar said that the Congress has clarified that his induction in the party was more important than winning or losing. "The Congress leaders have promised that in case Shettar loses the elections, the party will ensure he will be in active politics... a suitable position will be offered to him," an informed source said.

Shettar, who was denied a ticket from the BJP, revolted and joined Congress a few weeks before the assembly elections. Political pundits feel that to be the main reason for him losing by a huge margin against Mahesh Tenginkai of BJP.

There are also theories that Shettar would have lost even if he contested on a BJP ticket due to the anti-incumbency factor. "We are certain that Shettar will not retire soon. He may even contest in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from Dharwad against his old political friend and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi," the source added.

Supporters of Congress leaders Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar outside the private hotel in Bengaluru which hosted the Congress Legislature Party meeting on Sunday evening | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Siddu meets KJ George, MB Patil

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Siddaramaiah also held a confidential meeting with former minister KJ George late on Saturday evening, which was also attended by former minister MB Patil, a Lingayat leader, who is also rumoured to be in contention for the chief minister's post. Siddaramaiah also met his supporter and Hebbal MLA Byrati Suresh at the latter's apartment on Cunningham Road.

Shivakumar, a strong Vokkaliga leader, went on a temple run as he met two Veerashaiva Lingayat community religious heads at Kadasiddeshwara Mutt and Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru district.

The New Indian Express has also learnt from Congress circles that there are moves to placate senior leaders from the Dalit community by appointing one of them as deputy chief minister. However, it is still not clear how many deputy chief ministers will be appointed.

Children accompanied by their parents wait to greet former CM Siddaramaiah on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

AFTER POOR SHOW, JDS NOW FACES QUESTION OF RELEVANCE

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

IT was target 123 for the Janata Dal (Secular). If not, "visarjane madutheve" (dissolve the party), former chief minister **HD Kumaraswamy** had reportedly said before elections.

Faced with a humiliating defeat even in its strongholds -- the party managed to win only 19 seats -- the question before the JDS today is one of relevance. It failed to retain 18 of the 37 seats it had won in 2018.

Kumaraswamy was not available for comment, but tweeted, "Defeat is not new to our family; previously HD Deve Gowda, HD Revanna and myself had faced defeats" and that his "unrelenting efforts and struggles will continue".

The party's Pancharatna Yatre, just before elections were announced, was a tremendous success with a sizable turnout of supporters across 103 constituencies, but failed to translate into votes in more than 80 seats.

A vote share analysis shows the Vokkaliga vote has moved in unprecedented numbers from the JDS to the Congress, accounting for close to 20 lakh voters. The JDS' vote share dropped by 5 per cent, from 18 per cent to a mere 13.3 per cent.

The big shock for JDS is the loss of Nikhil Kumaraswamy in the party's pocketborough of Ramanagara, where there are more than 1 lakh Vokkaliga votes. Holenarasipur strongman and former minister HD Revanna too scraped through with a small margin.

The list of losers is long, and includes big names like former ministers Bandeppa Kashempur and Sa Ra Mahesh, and former Nagathan MLA Devanand Chavan.

The party has been on a downslide since 1999, when the Janata Dal split into the JDS and JDU. The JDS won 58 seats in 2004, but fell to 28 in 2008, when voters penalised it for not transferring power to the BJP, as promised. It bounced back in 2013 with 40 seats, faced by a BJP fractured into three -- BJP, Karnataka Janata Paksha and Badavara Shramikara Raithara Congress.

"The party is fading into irrelevance," said political analyst B S Murthy. Asked whether the BJP could capitalise on the JDS loss, ideologue Dr Vaman Acharya said, "The BJP needs to work towards it."

Rangayana director Cariappa resigns

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Mysuru

RANGAYANA director Addanda C Cariappa resigned from the post on Sunday citing moral responsibility after the BJP lost the recent Assembly elections. In his resignation letter addressed to the secretary of Kannada and Culture Department dated on May 14, Cariappa said, "The government which had appointed me as the director of Rangayana has lost the election. I will respect the people's mandate and by taking the moral responsibility, I am resigning from the director's post."

During his stint as the director of the repertory, Cariappa had criticised former chief minister Siddaramaiah and his welfare programmes as CM, his supporters, progressive thinkers and writers of the region on several occasions, including the national theatre festival — Bahuroopi.

Openly criticising the Tipu Jayanti started by Siddaramaiah, Cariappa had also penned a theatre play 'Tipu Nijakanasugalu' on the Mysuru ruler and successfully staged several plays across Karnataka.

In his resignation letter, Cariappa said he was appointed as the director on December 27, 2019 and took charge on December 31, 2019. "I have honestly served Rangayana and spread its popularity throughout the world. I also improved the financial condition of the cash-strapped theatre repertory. Due to my efforts, Ranayana has Rs 2.09 crore deposit and Rs 1.57 crore in savings account in the bank," he said.

KPCC chief DK Shivakumar cuts a cake on the eve of his birthday on Sunday. Several Congress leaders, including Siddaramaiah, were present | TWITTER

'Shivakumar eligible to stake claim for CM's post'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Many people may question why pontiffs should be involved in political matters, he said. "We never came out before the elections. Now, a prominent leader from the community has helped the party win the elections and he has all the ideals and strength to serve the people. We have to support him for the good cause and even the party should make use of his abilities," he clarified.

Without referring to the alleged harassment by law enforcement agencies, Nanjavadhoota Swami said, "If not for Shivakumar, others would not have survived it." All Vokkaliga CMs put together got only 100-120 months, but they have put the state on the track of development, he added. "Before the elections, Shivakumar had requested that he should be given the chance once. He is eligible to stake a claim for the CM's post," he added. He said the head of a prominent mutt of another dominant community was also of the view that Shivakumar should become the state's chief minister.

'CLEANSING ACT?'

Folk artiste cleans Modi roadshow route with gomutra, dung

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

IN a bizarre incident, Mysuru-based folk artiste Kamsale Ravi cleansed the Jamboo Savari route — the same road taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his recent roadshow — with gomutra, cow dung and water.

Ravi, who has been participating in the famous Dasara procession performing Kamsale for the past 25 years, had hired a tanker to spray water along the route from KR Circle near Amba Vilas Palace to Bannimantap. Ravi also sprinkled gomutra which was brought in a bottle. He was assisted by two women. The police, however, stopped him near Visvesvaraya Circle near Government Ayurveda College as he had not taken prior permission.

Kamsale Ravi cleans a part of the Jamboo Savari route with water, gomutra and cow dung in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYASHANKAR S

"I am not against PM Modi as he gave us free Covid vaccine. But, the Jamboo Savari route has been used by the Mysuru Royal family for the procession of Goddess Chamundeshwari for centuries. Only during Dasara festivities, the route is blocked for public movement. But, it is for the first time in the history of Mysuru that the route was blocked for the public for a different reason," Ravi told TNIE. Ravi said it is not PM Modi's fault as he is unaware of Mysuru's culture and tradition. "Local leaders should have told him about the importance of the procession route. They could have arranged an alternative route for the roadshow. The incident has insulted the erstwhile Mysuru royal family for which Goddess Chamundeshwari has cursed, leading to the defeat of BJP in the Assembly election," he said.

Amaravati: Naidu's guesthouse to be attached

Andhra govt orders attaching 22 immovable properties of former minister P Narayana

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

IN the latest development in the investigation of the alleged Amaravati land scam, the Andhra Pradesh government has issued orders authorising the APCID to attach TDP supremo and former CM N Chandrababu Naidu's guest house on Karakatta Road in Undavalli village, Tadepalli mandal as well as 22 immovable properties belonging to former minister P Narayana.

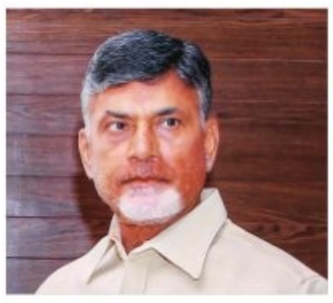
The state government issued two orders, GO No. 89 and 90, to this effect on May 12.

As per GO 89, the State government has taken action under Section 3 and 10 (a) (b) of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 1944 for attachment of immovable properties, preventing disposal or concealment of the ill-gotten wealth, and instructed APCID chief N Sanjay Kumar to take necessary action.

Through GO 90, the State government instructed the investigators to attach 22 immovable properties, allegedly belonging to former MAUD minister P Narayana, as they were suspected to be purchased before the design of the capital was announced.

Based on APCID's recommendations, the government issued the orders for attachment of the properties and instructed the probe agency to file an application with the Special Court for SPE and ACB Cases in Vijayawada for the same.

It may be recalled that the



ACB (Anti-Corruption Bureau) and APCID had registered cases against Naidu, Narayana and others in connection with the alleged insider trading of lands in Amaravati capital region. They had also seized various documents during inspections at their offices.

The action came after Mangalagiri MLA Alla Ramakrishna Reddy had lodged a complaint with the ACB and CID against Naidu, who was then the chairman of the AP Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA), and P Narayana, the then vice-chairman of APCRDA, alleging that they had indulged in insider trading and gained benefits from it.

According to the GO, the CID investigation revealed that Naidu (A1) and Narayana (A2) with the help of other officials abused their official position by changing the alignment of the Inner Ring Road (IRR) and gave information of the capital plan to benefit their benamis and avoid acquisition of lands belonging to businessman Lingamaneni Ramesh (A3), Heritage Foods and other companies.

3-day elephant census across southern states from May 17

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru:

TIGER census done, the forest department is now taking up an elephant census for the southern states to check on the pachyderm population. The three-day census will start on May 17.

The Karnataka forest department took the lead in initiating the exercise, as the all-India census was not yet announced by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

The census will comprise direct and indirect assessment methods. Counting at waterholes, dung analysis, vegetation and all set guidelines listed by MoEFCC will befollowed, Rajiv Ranjan, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife, told *The New Indian Express*.

The assessment will be done in sync, in the same format and at the same time in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and Goa. This will ensure that wandering pachyderms are covered. Ranjan said Maharashtra and Goa have also been roped into the exercise, as Karnataka's elephants are often found wandering in these two states.

Karnataka is home to a healthy tiger and elephant population. As per the last census report, there are 6,000 elephants in Karnataka, and the state is hoping to record a rise, though forest officials have not specified their expectations.

"Forest department staffers from all states have been trained for the census. The exercise will be documented and photographed. Camera trap images will also be used. The reports will also be shared on a daily basis with MoEFCC. The Nilgiri biosphere is expected to house the highest elephant population," said another forest official.

In the wake of recent incidents of man-elephant conflict, forest officials have decided not to rope in volunteers or students for the assessment this time. "The decision was taken for the safety of staffers and the people," Ranjan said.

JUMBO RIDES IN DUBARE

Conservationists and citizens are against the forest department for its decision to start elephant rides in Dubare Elephant Camp. Earlier too, there was a move to start elephant back rides in the safari buffer zone in Nagarhole Tiger Reserve (Anechowkur to Muthur), but the government scuttled the move after objections were raised. However, forest officials said a final decision decision is yet to be taken. "It is being planned only for the academic and environmental interest of children. A little bit of walking for elephants with significant weight on soft soil will not do much harm. No final decision has been taken," the officials said.

Conman cooks up tale of ill dad, tries to fleece flyers

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

IN a bid to fleece flyers at Bengaluru airport, a 27-year-old conman cooked up a sob story about an ailing father in hospital and went around soliciting money from passengers on Saturday night. However, a few flyers became suspicious and he landed behind bars.

Following complaints, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) took Vignesh from Chennai into custody and the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) police booked a case under Section 420 against him on Sunday.

According to CISF sources, Vignesh was caught red-handed around 7.30 pm on Saturday following an alert from flyers. "We found 26 credit cards in his wallet. Of them, 24 were valid. To appear as if he was a genuine passenger, he had booked a flight to Chennai to enter the airport. Later, he went around asking people for money ranging between Rs 8,000 and Rs 10,000 for emergency medical reasons for his hospitalised father."

A top source said that it appeared that he was part of a gang in which a few others could be involved. "This kind of activity inside an airport is rare. A similar one was reported at Bengaluru airport over two years ago. Something similar happened in Mumbai airport recently," he said.

MARINA MADNESS

To cool off on a scorching Sunday, people throng Marina Beach in Chennai | ASHWIN PRASATH

K'TAKA USES 81.27 PER CENT OF FLY ASH, SHOWS CPCB REPORT

PURAN CHOUDHARY @Bengaluru

A recent report released by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), which studied 200 thermal power plants (TPPs), revealed that Karnataka's seven TPPs produced 6.69 million tonnes (MT) of fly ash in 2021-2022. The state also generated 9.5 GW of electricity through these plants.

Of the total 6.69 MT of fly ash, only 5.4 million tonnes was used for different projects like cement industry, manufacturing bricks, blocks, tiles, highways roads and flyovers, the report showed.

Karnataka stood 13th among

17 states, using 81.27% of fly ash, with Haryana, which has five TPPs, topping the list with 264.82%.

KSPCB report for 2019-2020 showed that 11,796.4 MT of fly ash was unutilized from 20 coal and lignite-based power plants in Karnataka. Around 76,95,206 MT of 77,07,002.2 MT of fly ash generated in 2019-2020 was used while the rest continues to be dumped in landfills or sold in open markets.

Senior Environment Officer (SEO), Yogananda MN, KSPCB, said the board has started collecting data of unutilized ash and mulling what steps can be taken to reuse it.

The CPCB report also suggested measures for better utilization of fly ash by building fly ash parks or hubs in PPP mode. The induction of 'Fly Ash' as a subject in the academic curriculum of Engineering and Architecture courses was also recommended.

2 students allege assault by police, demand action

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

TWO college students have alleged that they were assaulted by police near Chandapura Circle in Anekal on Saturday around 7.30pm, and have demanded action against them.

Sairaj Natraj, one of the complainants, shared the harrowing experience on social media and posted pictures revealing bruises on their bodies, where police allegedly struck them with lathis.

Natraj said he was riding his bike with his cousin near Chandapura Circle amid heavy traffic caused by the weekly market and an election victory procession. "My cousin was directing me to take a right turn, since I was heading straight, which the police mistook as some insult against him, and took us near a booth where there were 5-6 cops, who were drunk and chewing tobacco. When we questioned our unlawful detention, they started beating us," Natraj said in his social media post.

He alleged that they were verbally abused, hit with lathis and slapped before they were let go. When they came back with their parents and relatives to question the detention, they too were harassed and threatened that they would be put behind bars, he added.

Natraj tagged the police, demanding action. After his tweet went viral, Suryanagar police approached them and promised to sort out the issue, he said.

Bengaluru Rural SP Mallikarjun Baladandi told TNIE, "According to the information I received, the students were drunk and used foul language against the policemen on duty, which triggered the staff and led to an altercation. The students will be questioned on Monday, after which we will get clarity on who was at fault. We have not registered a case yet."

1 killed, 4 injured as speeding car rams median

Bengaluru: A speeding car rammed a median and toppled on Saturday midnight, killing one and injuring four. The deceased has been identified as 36-year-old Muralidhar, a resident of Bileshivale in Devanahalli. On Saturda, Muralidhar, who is driving, lost control of the car and rammed the divider. Due to the impact, the car jumped the median and was thrown to the opposite side before toppling. Police said that Muralidhar was sitting in the front passenger seat and was not wearing a seat belt. Due to the impact, he was killed on the spot. Devanahalli traffic police have registered a case. **ENS**

IN TN TOWNS

10 dead after consuming spurious booze

BAGALAVAN PERIER B & GAUTHAM SELVARAJAN
@ Villupuram/Chennai

TEN people, including a septuagenarian woman, have lost their lives in Marakkanam and Maduranthakam allegedly after consuming spurious liquor. While six persons died at Marakkanam four passed away at Maduranthakam. As a result, seven police personnel in Villupuram and Chengalpattu districts were placed under suspension on Sunday and police are investigating if the two incidents are related.

Sources in Marakkanam, in Villupuram district, said that close to 80 residents of the Ekkiyarkuppam fishing hamlet had consumed hooch sold in the locality over the past few days.

Several of them took ill on Saturday and at least 20 villagers were admitted at nearby hospitals. Police sources said their inquiry into the deaths led to the discovery that hooch from Puducherry is being smuggled into the locality.

EXPRESS READ

Will close hate shops, says Surjewala

BENGALURU: After their thumping victory, Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala said, "In Karnataka we will lock down the hate shops and we will have only outlets for love." Speaking at the Bharat Jodo Bhavan on Sunday, he said Congress aims to provide a "transparent and pro-people administration". He said, "With the victory of 136 candidates and the victory of Ryotha Sangha's Darshan Puttannaiah Congress strength and the support of Gowribidanur independent MLA Puttaswamy Gowda, the strength of the party has gone up to 138." **ENS**

Drugs linked to Haji Salim network in Pak, says NCB

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

THE drugs consignment worth around ₹20,000 crore seized from a ship off Kerala coast has links to the infamous Karachi-based Haji Salim network, says the Narcotics Control Bureau. Around 2,500kg of high-grade methamphetamine (meth) were seized on Saturday in a joint operation by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and Indian Navy from a mother ship passing through the Arabian Sea.

According to NCB officials, some of the containers used to pack the contraband had the '555 Rolex' seal, which is associated with Haji Salim network. The officials said this is the third time a large consignment belonging to the Haji Salim network has been seized off the Kerala shores in the past two years.

The officials said the Iranian ship, which acted as the mother vessel, was destined for Sri Lanka. The ship was sinking when it was intercepted.

The officials suspect that the smugglers probably realised that they had been spotted and were trying to sink the vessel before action by law enforcement. Meanwhile, NCB officials are interrogating the Pakistan national arrested from the vessel. The IB and NIA have also grilled four other crew members. The Pakistani national will be produced before court on Monday. The NCB will seek his custody.

Three arrested for selling OTPs to ISI agents

ASISH MEHTA @Bhubaneswar

THREE persons, including teacher of an industrial training institute (ITI), were arrested on Sunday by the STF of Odisha Crime Branch for fraudulently procuring pre-activated SIM cards and allegedly selling the one-time passwords (OTPs) to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) operatives.

The OTPs were allegedly used by Pakistani operatives to create fake social media accounts and email IDs for various anti-India activities, from spying, radicalisation, propaganda to sextortion and honeytrapping, officals said. Acting on a tip-off, the STF conducted raids and nabbed Pathanisamant Lenka (35) of Itamati, who is a teacher at a private ITI, Saroj Kumar Nayak alias Amit (26) of Poibadi in Nayagarh district and Soumya Pattanaik (19) of Sujanpur in Jajpur district.

During the raids in Nayagarh and Jajpur districts, the task force officials seized 19 mobile phones, 47 pre-activated SIM cards, 23 empty SIM covers and 61 ATM cards from the trio.

Jai Narayan Pankaj, STF IG, said the three were fraudulently procuring SIM cards in bulk issued. They then sold the OTPs and links generated to ISI agents in Pakistan and those operating in India for huge sums of money. They were even selling the OTPs to cyber frauds.

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK
(A scheduled commercial bank)

Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002.

Whereas you the below mentioned Borrower's, Co-Borrower's, Guarantor's and Mortgagors have availed loans from **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited,** by mortgaging your immovable properties. Consequent to default committed by you all, your loan account has been classified as **Non-performing Asset,** whereas **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** being a secured creditor under the Act, and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with rule 2 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued **Demand notice** calling upon the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors as mentioned in column No.2 to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with future interest thereon within **60 days** from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served on some of them for various reasons.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	Loan Account No. & Loan Amount	Details of the Security to be enforced	Date of NPA & Demand Notice date	Amount Due in Rs. / as on
1	1) Mr. Renukappa R, 2) Mrs. Ramakka T, W/o. Mr. Renukappa R	Loan Account No. 46989630000521 Loan Amount: Rs.2,10,000/-	**Schedule-II - Details of Secured Assets - Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that Piece and Parcel of the Property bearing E-No.321/ 353/1, ID No. 150300302300800431, situated at Hanabe Village, Doddaballapura Block, and Bangalore Rural District, Presently comes under the limits of Hanabe Grama Panchayath and **Bounded on the: East by:** Road, **West by:** House belongs to Revanna, **North by:** 12 feet Vacant Site, **South by:** Passage and House. Measuring East to West: 9.144 Mtrs, and North to South: 6.096 Mtrs, in all measuring 55.74 Sq.mtrs.	Date of NPA: 03-04-2023 Demand Notice Date: 12-05-2023	Rs.2,03,152/- (Rupees Two Lakh Three Thousand One Hundred Fifty Two Only) dues as on 11-05-2023
2	1) Mr. Venkatesh S R Also at: Hawks Eye Facilities Managament, 2) Mrs. Vijayalakshmi B.	Loan Account No. 45359420000912 45359430000849 Loan Amount: Rs.32,95,787/- Rs.2,97,627/-	**Schedule-II - Details of Secured Assets - Mortgaged Immovable Property: - Schedule-A Property:** All that piece and parcel of Property bearing Site Nos.37 and 40, carved out of Sy.No.21/2, situated at J.P.Nagar 8th Phase, Kothanur Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, formerly No.37 and 40, Khatha No.798' situated at Vaddarapalya Grama, UttarahalliHobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West: 40-0 feet, North to South: 60-0 feet' totally measuring 2400 Square feet and **Bounded on the: East by:** Site No.36 and 41, **West by:** Site No.38 and 39, **North by:** (Old Road) presently Private Property, **South by:** Road. **Schedule-B Property: (Undivided share of land here by agreed to convey under this Agreement):** 242.55 Square feet of undivided share, right, title and interest of land in the Schedule 'A' Property. **Schedule-C Property: (Super Built-up Area of the Flat hereby agreed to convey under this Agreement):** Residential Flat bearing Flat No.2-B (2 BHK) in First Floor in the residential Apartment building known as "S.L.HOMES", having 1155 Square feet of Super Built-Up Area, constructed on the Schedule 'A' Property, constructed with Vitrified tiles flooring, Main door is Teak wood frame with ISI Teak flush doors, 3 Tract UPVC windows with MS grills, along with One Covered Car Parking Place in Stilt Floor, together with proportionate share of right, title and interest in common areas, passages, lobbies, staircase, lift and other areas of common use in the Schedule A' Property.	Date of NPA: 04-05-2023 Demand Notice Date: 12-05-2023	Rs.34,31,121.87 (Rupees Thirty Four Lakh Thirty One Thousand One Hundred Twenty One and Paisa Eighty Seven Only) in the **Loan Account No. 45359420000912 & Rs.2,25,831.00** (Rupees Two Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty One Only) in the **Loan Account No. 45359430000849 due as on 11-05-2023**
3	1) Mrs. Aruna S, 2) Mrs. Shanthamma C, 3) Mr. Siddalingappa	Loan Account No. 33879420000081 Loan Amount: Rs.20,00,000/-	**Schedule-II - Details of Secured Assets - Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that piece and parcel of the Residential Site property bearing No.223, Katha No.842/25/223, ward No.05, Survey No.25, of Agrahar Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Presently coming under the jurisdiction of BBMP Measuring East to West: 40 Feet and North to South: 30 Feet, Total Measuring 1200 Sq.feet. **East by:** Road, **West by:** Site No.228, **North by:** Site No.224, **South by:** Site No.222.	Date of NPA: 04-05-2023 Demand Notice Date: 12-05-2023	Rs.20,46,975.10 (Rupees Twenty Lakh Forty Six Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Five and Paisa Ten Only) dues as on 10-05-2023

Notice is therefore given to the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor & Mortgagor as mentioned in Column No.2, calling upon them to make payment of the aggregate amount as shown in column No.6, against all the respective Borrower/ Co-Borrower within **60 days** of Publication of this notice as the said amount is found payable in relation to the respective loan account as on the date shown in Column No. 6. It is made clear that if the aggregate amount together with future interest and other amounts which may become payable till the date of payment, is not paid, **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** shall be constrained to take appropriate action for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described in Column No.4. Please note that this publication is made without prejudice to such rights and remedies as are available to **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** against the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors of the said financials under the law, you are further requested to note that as per section 13(13) of the said act, you are restrained/ prohibited from disposing of or dealing with the above security or transferring by way of sale, lease or otherwise of the secured asset without prior consent of Secured Creditor.

Date: 15.05.2023, Place: Bangalore

Sd/- Authorised Officer, For Jana Small Finance Bank Limited

EDITORIAL

To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe

Anatole France

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

IMRAN IN HEAD-ON COLLISION WITH PAK'S POWERFUL MILITARY

By squarely blaming Army Chief Gen Asim Munir for his dramatic 'abduction' from the Islamabad high court and arrest last week, former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan appears to have put himself on a collision course with the country's powerful military establishment. Both share a bitter history, as Gen Asim had as head of the ISI in 2019 uncovered a racketeer co-opting Imran's wife Bushra Bibi for his shady deals. Imran sought to shoot the messenger by transferring him out of the ISI. Known to be otherwise upright, Gen Asim has no sympathies for Imran, against whom serious corruption charges seem to be crawling out of the woodwork every other day. The former PM had earlier charged that a top ISI officer, Major General Faisal Naseer, was plotting to kill him. Fixing political opponents is among the skill sets ISI officers are known to possess, as Imran's loyalist Lt Gen Faiz Hameed had forced his predecessor Nawaz Sharif into exile through a mesh of graft cases. The cricketer-turned-neta, during his tenure as PM, had cultivated a clutch of top army officers, including a Corps Commander posted in Lahore. That officer refused to act against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) vandals who ransacked his residence following Imran's arrest on May 9. PTI mobs also stormed the Army General headquarters in Rawalpindi, making it a black day for the military.

Imran had urged his party to hit the streets if he were to be arrested but refused to take responsibility for their rampage. After the surprise attacks by rioters, Gen Asim has announced zero tolerance for further acts of vandalism on security establishments. Parallelly, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif gave the law enforcement agencies three days to round up all involved in the violence, which could lead to fresh confrontation. Given that Gen Asim does not want Imran back in power, any further unrest would give the government a handle to ban the PTI, citing the threat to national security.

At present, the judiciary appears to be Imran's lone ally. But with Pakistan Chief Justice Bandial due to retire in September, that crutch would crumble before the nation goes to polls. In the end, Imran's ability to arouse passion and create a cadre frenzy could be his biggest undoing. Politics is more like Test cricket; playing it the T20 way could be counter-productive.

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN THWARTING AI ADOPTION

Many technology experts, including those who worked extensively in shaping Artificial Intelligence (AI) over the years, have woken up to the risks AI poses to humanity—the most immediate being the huge loss of jobs. Some estimates peg the number of job losses due to AI at 300 million. The fear of job loss is more alarming this time. Unlike previous technology shifts, the adoption of AI may endanger a large number of white-collar jobs as well. While the concerns may be real, technology enthusiasts sometimes exaggerate the risks posed by new technology by overstating its potential.

Artificial Intelligence is getting increasingly sophisticated with big data and machine learning techniques, so much so that machines can be developed with human-like capabilities. We had already experienced the capabilities AI can render to devices when audio assistants like Alexa flooded the market a few years ago. Alexa can respond to your audio queries, play songs for you, and even get your questions answered. Then came ChatGPT, an AI chatbot which can be trained to follow orders and provide detailed answers. ChatGPT and other such tools—most in infancy vis-à-vis their abilities—have already become popular. They can be used to write essays, program codes, edit copies, etc. Big technology companies are already exploring ways to reduce employee strength by deploying AI. It is predicted that IBM will replace nearly 8,000 jobs in 2024 with AI. The effect of AI deployment could be different for different sectors as far as job losses are concerned. As many as 40–50% of legal and administrative tasks can be automated using AI. Apart from job losses, AI poses challenges like social media manipulation, breach of privacy, and many other ethical and moral issues like creating a more inequitable society.

While these challenges and risks could be genuine, like in all previous technology shifts, the current narrative of painting AI as the Frankenstein monster could be due to the fear of the unknown, and hence exaggerated. The use of technology opens up new possibilities—possibilities many would not have imagined. And at the same time, it throws up new challenges. Humankind has, over the centuries, learned to use the enormous possibilities of technology adoption and minimise its ill effects. This time it should not be any different, and so, while we need to be mindful of the negatives, we cannot shut the doors on the technology revolution called AI.

QUICK TAKE

CRIMINALISE BODY-SHAMING

New York becomes the sixth US city to outlaw weight discrimination. In India, the fight is yet to begin. Most Indian households routinise fat-shaming, and women and girls of marriageable age are the biggest victims. They're made to suffer taunts for not having hourglass figures. It's nightmarish for obese boys and girls alike in schools and colleges, leading to depression. Genes, stress and medicine lead to obesity, but insensitivity ignores these facts. Influencers and celebrities currently campaign for respecting the natural body, but the malaise runs deep. India needs legislation criminalising body-shaming to make size a protected attribute like gender.

There is euphoria in the Congress camp, some glum introspection in the BJP's ranks, and big disappointment in the JDS' ranks, which this time is neither king nor kingmaker

AFTER THE K'TAKA BATTLE, A FEW KEY TAKEAWAYS

HARISH BIJOOR

Brand Guru and Founder, Harish Bijoor Consults Inc

A legislative Assembly election that covers just about 5.22 crore Indians in Karnataka has just been completed. A big election, then. The campaign has closed, and the votes have been counted. The mandate of the people of Karnataka has been announced decisively and recorded. The people of the state have decided on a change of government. The BJP government has been voted out, and a decisive majority has been given to a Congress-led government.

There is euphoria in the Congress camp, a certain degree of glum introspection in the BJP's ranks, and a big degree of disappointment in the ranks of the JDS, which this time is neither king nor kingmaker. Time to then analyse the victory and the defeat in equal measure. Time to sit back neutrally and check on what went right and what did not for the three major parties in the fray.

When I look at Karnataka, a state that has been at the forefront of economic prosperity for the last decade, there is a sense of relief among all concerned that there is a government with a clear mandate to rule in place. The state has seen successive sets of years with a fractured mandate that has had governance suffer. The state has wanted one of the three parties to have a clear mandate to run its affairs rather than live in the shadow of a mixed governance structure.

What do I see to be the clear trends and issues this election result throws up? Here are the top five ones from my perch of perspective.

Firstly, Karnataka votes differently in every election. This is a clear trend the state is famous for. The electorate is considered to be a very savvy one. One that distinguishes issues that are local and issues that are national. It votes differently in the Lok Sabha elections as opposed to the Vidhana Sabha elections. The very same voter would vote for the BJP when it comes to managing the nation and in favour of the Congress when it comes to the state. I would go one step further and wager a bet that the same person might consider a whole new party for the BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) city corporation elections ahead. AAP, are you listening?

Secondly, Karnataka changes its government every five years. The state believes in change. It started in the 1990s, and the state has continuously changed its governments from one party colour to another. Karnataka has done it again this time round. The winning party needs to keep this in mind as it has a clear-cut 60 months to deliver on its many promises.

SOUMYADIP SINHA

Thirdly, Karnataka reinvents the model of a local election with local issues. The strategy team in the Congress party has got it right this time. Just as the narrative of the BJP has been centred on the good governance and leadership given to the country by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress has been saying that this is a state election and you need credible state leaders to manage the show. Both D K Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah have been very vocal on this. It looks as if the message has sunk deep into the electorate, which finally heard them.

Fourthly, politics gets divided into rich politics versus poor politics. This was an election that divided the audiences economically. The post-Covid reality of stressed homes—families struggling with low incomes and high prices of essential commodities—hit hard. The LPG cylinder hogged the limelight once again. This time as an icon of imagery of the steep increase in prices poor homes faced. The woman of the house was up in arms and used her vote to say what she wanted to say.

And finally, Karnataka goes bipolar. If one looks at how the Old Mysuru (hitherto the bastion of the JDS) area voted, it appears as if the Congress gained at the cost of the JDS. The Congress narrative of being a party that could form a government was sold well to the region's electorate. The JDS did not have the same clout of narrative. The JDS, of late, has been seen as a kingmaker party. A party that chips in when push comes to shove but one that cannot form a government on its own. This seems to have hurt the vote.

As the election hurly burly settles, the BJP will go into a huddle and introspect. The party, which has a very strong "always on" cadre, unlike cadres of other parties which are rather "election time-mobilised" or "individual constituency leader-focused"—is not giving up. One election loss in the state that paved the way for its first-ever South Indian entry will not dampen its enthusiasm.

Work will begin immediately to get its cadre into election mode again for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The BJP knows that the state votes differently in every election and will look forward to repeating its record contribution of 25 Lok Sabha seats in the last election. The BJP is a party with a deep and abiding plan. It is a party that thinks not about the next election alone but with a canvas of the next 25 years in mind. It will be back to the drawing board to plan its next step and action. It will be business as usual. This time round, as the primary opposition party in the state.

The JDS looks decimated for now. It does still have a concentration of seats in its kitty. The party has already articulated its role as a local party of significance amidst a set of national parties that aspire to rule the state. The Tamil Nadu model where Dravidian parties keep national parties out is something the JDS will look at keenly for sure. Local issues are best dealt with by the local parties. The JDS then has a plan of action ahead for sure. And to do this, it does need a lot of money (which it did not have in this election), and a lot of focus and passion to pursue this purpose.

For now, however, with this big and decisive win, it is party time for the Congress, introspection time for the BJP and deep-introspection time for the JDS. Congratulations to the leadership team of Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Vadra. And a bigger congratulations to the untiring efforts of D K Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah. Whatever happens from now on, it can't be said that the two did not do what they were meant to do. And they did it well.

(harishbijoor@hotmail.com)

WHEN A YOUNG LAD HELPED HIMSELF TO SOME PUTTU

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

In Southern tradition, Lord Shiva often gets actively involved in the lives of his devotees, as we saw in the tale of 'Thayumanavar' (Faithline, *When the manliest of gods became a mother*, March 20, 2023). This popular *Shivlila* or divine game that I would like to retell is also from the *Thiruvilayadal* or 'Sacred Games', a collection of 64 Tamil *Shivlilas*. It came about one Shravan in the ninth century in Madurai, at a place called Puttu Thopu on the south bank of the river Vaigai. The tale goes that the Pandyan king, Varaguna Varman II, ordered every household in Madurai to help build a bund on the banks of the river Vaigai to protect the kingdom from seasonal floods.

An old lady called Vanti Amma was told by her local overseer to help carry baskets of earth. But she was too weak for this task. Nor had she anyone to call her own who could take her place. However, if she did nothing at all, the guards were sure to send her to jail for dereliction of duty. Pandyan law was strict.

So Vanti Amma gamely came up with a scheme, which she dedicated to Lord Shiva whom she loved with all her heart. She counted out a few coins from her scant hoard and went shopping, after which she carefully prepared some puttu, mixing coarsely ground rice, grated coconut, jeera, salt and water, which she steamed in bamboo cylinders. She planned to offer portions of this puttu to anyone who would help her.

Shiva, who was idly watching the people of Madurai scurry around like ants, noticed her activities. He understood her plan at once and liked the genuine effort that the old lady was making to both do her duty and save her dignity. "She deserves some help, see how she's trying to cope alone," he told Parvati and promptly thought of a new game to play.

Meanwhile, Vanti Amma sat near the river bank with the fresh puttu enticingly laid out on a banana leaf. She waved a palm leaf fan over it to keep flies away and also fan herself.

"Puttu for any good person who will work in my place!" she called.

But everybody who passed by was already on embankment duty and Vanti Amma grew nervous. Would nobody come forward? Would she have to go to jail after all? However, after some time, a boy of not more than sixteen, dressed in a faded dhoti, came by and greeted her.

"Why are you giving away free puttu, Granny?" he asked, squatting beside her.

"Child, I don't have the strength to do my share of work. So I'm hoping someone will take my place in exchange for some food," said Vanti Amma.

"Oh, is that all? I can do that for you," laughed the boy, flexing his arm.

"May Lord Somasundara bless you, child!" said Vanti, invoking Shiva's name in Madurai. "Take as much puttu as you like."

The boy delicately helped himself to a small handful of puttu. After eating it, he smacked his lips and grinned cheekily.

P RAVIKUMAR

Vanti Amma sat near the river bank with the fresh puttu enticingly laid out on a banana leaf. She waved a palm leaf fan over it to keep flies away and also fan herself. "Puttu for any good person who will work in my place!" she called

"Excellent puttu, Granny," he said and strolled off towards the guards to pick up a stout cane basket. "I'm standing in for that old lady, see? Better tick her name off your list," he told them and set to work.

The boy carried soil steadily to and fro from the earthworks. Coming and going, he sang and whistled, made funny remarks, helpfully caught the arm of anyone who stumbled and cheerfully laboured with the people of Madurai. The atmosphere around him grew light and carefree despite the hard work going on. When the overseer gave his section a short break, the boy put the basket down under a tree, turned his back on the bustle and went to sleep.

Meanwhile, the king himself arrived to inspect the work. He was very annoyed to spot a teenager sleeping the morning away. He dismounted from his horse, strode up to the boy and delivered a smart blow of his whip on the boy's back.

"Aaah!" screamed the workers and so did the king. They had all felt the lash. What strange happening was this?

Now, Varaguna Varman knew something about the god he prayed to every day. Who else could it be, playing such tricks?

He fell to his knees beside the boy who turned over and smiled sleepily.

"I'm sorry it hurt. But it couldn't be helped, could it, when I'm in each one of you...even in old women with no strength to work?" he said and vanished.

The king could not believe his luck. "I saw Him. He spoke to me!" he said joyfully. After making enquiries, he deeply regretted his sweeping diktat that had not spared the old and the weak. He excused Vanti Amma from bund duty and humbly requested her to pack the remaining puttu for him as prasadam.

When the workers realised what had happened, they fell to their knees, arms upraised. "We must have done something good in our past lives that He showed himself to us so affectionately," they said, eyes overflowing.

The old lady thanked Shiva, heart and soul. She died soon after in great peace and happiness, for Shiva gave her mukti for just that handful of puttu.

Krishna gave Sudama unimaginable wealth for two handfuls of poha. Shiva gave Vanti liberation itself for a handful of puttu. How the gods love to serve those who love them.

Everywhere you look, you find us by a riverbank, a lake, a hill or shore, celebrating the *lilas* of the gods.

So you won't be surprised that every Shravan, to this day, the people of Madurai make puttu to take on a picnic to Puttu Thopu in remembrance of Shiva's *lila* there ('Thopu' means 'grove'). The Meenakshi temple is apparently closed for two days during that time so that Parvati and Shiva can go in procession to the banks of the Vaigai to join the party.

(shebaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Congress wins

The Karnataka electorate has given a clear and comfortable majority to the Congress. The BJP never deserved to retain power because of its manipulative politics. Both rivals openly employed "divide and appease" policies, and this time round, the Congress' brand of "politricks" gained an upper hand. But it remains to be seen whether the winning party will be able to fulfill its electoral promises, all huge burdens on the exchequer.
Govardhana Myneedu, Vijayawada

Lessons galore

Even the BJP cannot deny that the "40% commission" slogan of the Congress did make a difference. Lessons to be learnt for the BJP: Caste politics can also backfire, Assembly elections are essentially fought on local issues, and the lack of an effective local leadership was glaringly evident. The biggest problem for the GOP? Trying to stem dissidence once the government is formed.
Srinivasan S K, Bengaluru

Election agenda

It is outright appeasement of the Muslim community that helped the Congress win in Karnataka. Promises of blanket reservations for Muslims and the ban of Bajrang Dal tipped the scales in favour of the Congress. Both are highly communal and divisive agendas put forth by the so-called secular party.
Athulya M, Hyderabad

2024 polls

With the defeat in Karnataka, BJP is now out of power in South India. Its communal politics and imposition of Hindi have angered the people of Dravidian states. Unless corrective steps are taken, BJP will find it difficult to come back to power in 2024.
N A Joseph, Ettumanoor

Chawla's talent

Piyush Chawla has been a revelation in IPL 2023. The veteran leg-spinner has taken fans down memory lane, deceiving batters both in the air and off the pitch in a fine display of leg-spin bowling. IPL not only provides ample opportunities for youngsters to make their mark, but for seasoned campaigners to do so too. And Piyush Chawla has proved it.
R Sivakumar, Chennai

Eradicating casteism

This is with reference to the column *SC/ST markers: One size doesn't fit all* (May 13). The basic reason for the mayhem is that unrestrained casteism persists in the region. Without the eradication of casteism from India, we cannot expect a perpetual peaceful atmosphere. Political parties still directly and indirectly encourage caste polarisation to enjoy benefits from the regime.
Thomas K M, Muvattupuzha

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Chairman of the Board: **Manoj Kumar Sonthalia** Editor: **Santwana Bhattacharya**

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TWEETS OF THE DAY

Shivraj Singh Chouhan @ChouhanShivraj
Farmers not only became defaulters due to Congress's false loan waiver, but the bundle of interest also fell on their heads.

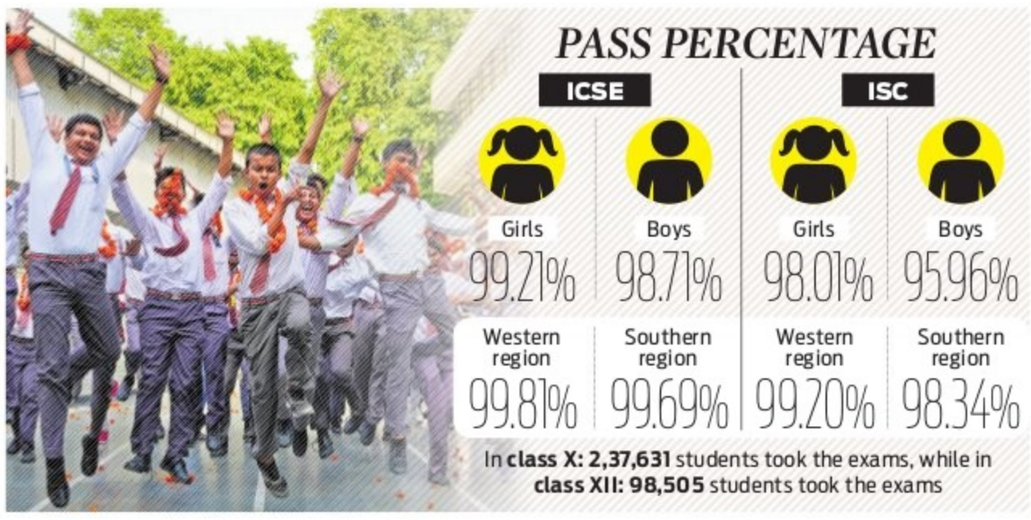
Sharad Pawar @PawarSpeaks
Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj fought hard till the end against Aurangzeb, who was coming to destroy Swarajya, and managed the axis of Swarajya

Aaditya Thackeray @AUThackeray
On the occasion of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj's birth anniversary, Worli Kai. Was present today at the inauguration of 'Ranangan Mawla'

Girls outshine boys in ICSE, ISC examinations

In Class X, 9 students share top rank with 99.80% marks, while 5 share the first rank with 99.75% score in Class XII

KAVITA BAJELI-DATT @ New Delhi



THE Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) on Sunday declared the class X and class XII results. While 98.94 per cent students of class X cleared the exam, 96.93 per cent of class XII students were successful in board examinations.

Like in the CBSE final results, which were announced on Friday, girls outperform boys in both classes X (ICSE) and XII (ISC). The CISCE said girls have done better than boys, with a pass percentage of 99.21 per cent, while boys secured a pass percentage of 98.71 per cent in ICSE exams. Similarly in class XII, girls have achieved a pass percentage of 98.01 per cent compared to boys who achieved a pass percentage of 95.96 per cent.

The Council said that in class X, the western region performed the best, with a pass percentage of 99.81 per cent, followed by the southern region, with a pass percentage of 99.69 per cent. The southern region also has the highest rate of girls (49.61 per cent) who had appeared in the examination.

However, in the ISC or class XII, the south region has the best pass percentage with 99.20 per cent, followed by the western region, which scored 98.34 per cent. The south region also has the highest percentage of girls (51 per cent).

In class X, nine students shared the top rank with 99.80 per cent marks. They are Rushil Kumar, Ananya Karthik, Shreya Upadhyay, Advay Sardesai, Yash Manish Bhasein, Tanay Sushil Shah, Hiya Sanghavi, Avishi Singh and Sambit Mukhopadhyay. In class XII, five students shared the first rank with 99.75 per cent. They are Riya Aggarwal, Ipshita Bhattacharya, Mohd Aryaan Tariq, Subham Kumar Agarwal and Manya Gupta.

According to CISCE chief executive Gerry Arathoon, the class X (ICSE) exam was conducted in 63 written subjects of which 21 were Indian, 14 were foreign, and two were classical languages. The class XII (ISC) exam was conducted in 47 written subjects, of which 12 were Indian languages, three were foreign languages, and one classical language, he said.

In class X, 237,631 students – 128,131 (53.92 per cent) boys and 1,09,500 (46.08 per cent) girls – took the exam, while in Class 12, 98,505 students attended the exam. While 51,781 (52.57 per cent) were boys, 46,724 (47.43 per cent) were girls in class XII.

POWER GAMES

SHAHID FARIDI
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Factional Feud

CONGRESS HIGH COMMAND TO CRACK WHIP IN RAJASTHAN

The conclusion of the Karnataka election has turned the Congress leadership's attention towards the long-standing leadership tussle in Rajasthan. Unlike in Karnataka, where the party's two top state leaders – Siddaramaiah and D K Shivakumar – made a joint effort to steer the party to victory, Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot have been locked in a bitter battle. Pilot has been eyeing the chief minister's post, which Gehlot has refused to vacate. The party's central leadership tried to settle the row, but the two leaders refused to budge from their positions. Sources said the leadership has now decided to crack the whip to make the warring duo fall in line. The party, being particularly cut up about the unaccommodating attitude of the chief minister, has decided to enforce its writ by addressing Pilot's problems.

Trouble in Northeast

CENTRE PROBES INTERNAL SABOTAGE ANGLE IN MANIPUR

The ruling BJP's troubles seem to be growing in the northeastern state of Manipur. Last year, a group of MLAs landed in Delhi seeking reconstitution of the state ministry and removal of Chief Minister Biren Singh. Last week, 10 MLAs belonging to the ruling party signed a statement asking the central government to carve out a separate tribal state out of Manipur. The demand for a separate state followed violent clashes in which scores of people lost their lives and property worth crores was damaged. The dominant Meiteis and the Chin-Kuki-Mizo-Zomi hill tribals have been at loggerheads over the demand by Meiteis to recognise them as Scheduled Tribes. The tribal MLAs have expressed a complete loss of faith in the chief minister and his administration. As tension between the two groups continued, the Centre played mediator and summoned the state's top leaders to Delhi on Sunday. Sources said that two days back, a prominent BJP leader, who does not belong to Manipur, had met the rebellious tribal MLAs outside the state. The Union government has learned about this rendezvous and is keen to know what transpired in the meeting. Sources in the BJP did not rule out the role of insiders in destabilising the Manipur government.

Anniversary Report

GOVT DEPTS RACING TO BEAT MAY 26 RELEASE DEADLINE

Officers of the Union government's publicity division – Press Information Bureau – have been working frenetically to meet the May 26 deadline for releasing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ninth-anniversary report. The Prime Minister's Office has given a format to be followed by all departments while collecting data on the government's flagship schemes and the number of jobs created over the last year. The focus of this year's anniversary report will be the creation of infrastructure and jobs. The government will launch a major advertisement blitz in newspapers, televisions, digital media and outdoor advertising to highlight its achievements in its ninth year. Modi took oath as Prime Minister on May 26, 2014. He won a second term in 2019.

As global rice supply dips, prospects for Indian basmati zoom

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

RICE-WISE: THE FIGURES

- Global rice output: **510 million** tonnes
- India's output: **130.84 mt** (25% of global production)
- Global trade: **54 million** tonnes
- India's contribution: **21.5 mt** (42% of global rice trade)

THE last year's extreme weather events across the major rice-producing region of the world caused a short supply of rice in the international market, which will impact 3.5 billion rice consumers, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. However, it raised the hope of Indian paddy growers to get better prices as the country is a significant player in the rice export market.

China, the largest producer and consumer of rice, faced a shortfall of production. Its largest rice-producing region Guangxi and Guangdong province witnessed the second-highest rainfall in the past two decades, causing loss of production. Pakistan, which shares around 8 per cent in rice export market, saw an unprecedented flood that caused a heavy production loss. Rainfall too deficit in India's kharif season had lowered rice production. However, it managed its yearly target by increasing output in the rabi season.

Pakistan's lower production of basmati rice – an aromatic rice variety – also led to loss of clients. Now, traders are eyeing Indian basmati growers to increase the production. India contributes 80 per cent of the world's basmati rice and the rest comes from Pakistan.

"We have kept a target to increase the basmati acreage from 4.5 to 5.5 lakh hectares to meet the demand of international market," says Gurvinder Singh, Director Department of Agriculture Punjab.

International agri-commodity analysts raised the concern that rice production this year could be at its lowest in decades. The rice shortfall in the global market would be around 9 million tonnes (mt) since 2003-2004, when deficit of rice was around 18 mt.

A commodity analyst at Fitch Solution, Charles Hart, recently said that the world will have a rice deficit in the coming days and the price of rice as high in the past decade. The shortfall of rice in the international market led to an over 25 per cent rise in international price in the past 17 months.

MoD frees another 928 items for domestic procurement

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

IMPETUS TO MAKE IN INDIA

928 strategically-important items will be procured domestically, according to the 4th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL)

₹715 crore Import substitution value of 4th PIL

2,500 items have already been indigenised

1,238 (351+107+780) items will be indigenised within the given timeline of December 2023-December 2028

262 items indigenised from the first PIL, 11 from the second list and 37 from the third PIL

$25 BN is the turnover target in defence manufacturing in the next five years, which includes an export target of $5 billion

THE defence ministry has approved a fresh list of 928 components and subsystems which will only be procured from the domestic industry. A ban on their import will kick in under a staggered time-line of around five-and-a-half years.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has okayed the 4th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) of 928 strategically-important line replacement units (LRUs)/subsystems/spares and components, including high-end materials and spares, with import substitution value worth ₹715 crore.

These lists contain 2,500 items which have been already indigenised and 1,238 items which will be indigenised within the given timelines. Of these 1,238, over 300 items have been indigenised, according to a ministry statement.

The goal is to "promote 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence and minimise imports by defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs), the defence ministry said.

"DPSUs will undertake indigenisation of these items through different routes under 'Make' category and in-house development through the capabilities of MSMEs and private Indian industry, thereby providing impetus to the growth in economy, enhanced investment in defence and reduction in import dependence of DPSUs."

In a tweet, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the Narendra Modi government is committed towards indigenisation and ensuring self reliance in the defence sector.

The ministry said DPSUs will soon initiate procurement action for these notified items.

In the last few years, the government has taken a series of measures to promote domestic defence production. India is one of the largest importers of arms globally.

In a tweet, defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the Narendra Modi government is committed towards indigenisation and ensuring self-reliance in the defence sector.

"Keeping this in mind, the 4th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) of 928 strategically-important Line Replacement Units (LRUs)/Sub-systems/Spares and Components has been approved," he tweeted.

"The list includes high-end materials and spares, with import substitution value worth Rs 715 crore," Singh added.

The ministry said DPSUs will soon initiate procurement action for these notified items.

In the last few years, the government has taken a series of measures to promote domestic defence production. India is one of the largest importers of arms globally.

CJI shows progressive side of law on LGBTQ

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

IN 2018, CJI DY Chandrachud set the ball rolling to accord the right of equal existence to the queer community. The CJI was then a part of the Navtej Singh Johar verdict in which the Supreme Court ruled that the denial of the right to sexual orientation to LGBT amounted to the denial of their citizenship.

Justice Chandrachud stressed that Section 377 of IPC had caged the human instinct of love by constraining the physical manifestation of sexuality. He said the provision had consigned a group of citizens to the margins and was destructive of their identities.

In his speech at the British High Commission on 'Beyond Navtej: The Future of LGBTQ+ Movement in India,' Justice Chandrachud said he disagreed with the lyrics of the famous Beatles' song 'All You Need Is Love'. He said the ruling in the Navtej case was on its own insufficient to aid the community in achieving equality and ending discrimination against LGBTQ+ community. The CJI thus emerged as a saviour of queers' rights to bestow on them truly equal citizenship.

The CJI this year agreed to place before a bench a batch of pleas seeking legal recognition to same-sex marriage.

After an extensive hearing spanning 10 days, the bench reserved its verdict in the same-sex marriage case. However, the formation of the five-judge constitution bench headed by the CJI prompted the Centre to form a committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary to explore the administrative steps that can be taken to accord basic social rights to same-sex couples. The government had termed this form of marriage as an "urban elitist concept."

The CJI while discussing the ambit of gender and whether it expanded beyond the biological sex of a person had on day one of the hearing said that the very notion of a man and a woman is not "an absolute based on genitals". Asserting that the existence of same-sex couples was not imported from somewhere else, was a part of the society and that same-sex relationships are "not just physical but something more of a stable emotional relationship, the CJI had also questioned the need for being a binary gender for marriage.

The CJI has also undertaken initiatives for revisiting the modes of organisation and spatial developments aimed explicitly at the sensitisation of the LGBTQIA+ community. For their inclusion within the SC, the top court under his aegis is in the process of creating nine universal restrooms at different locations in the main building and additional building of the court complex. To further ensure a "dignified work environment" the SC earlier this year also made an "online appearance portal" gender-neutral and inducted senior advocate Dr Maneka Guruswamy as a member of "gender sensitization and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC).

The top court is also actively considering the proposal put forth by an advocate from the community of broadening the scope of GSICC to the Gender and Sexuality Sensitization and Internal Complaints Committee.

The Supreme Court has reserved verdict in the same-sex marriage case| FILE PHOTO

'Section 377 constrained physical manifestation'

Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud stressed that Section 377 of IPC had caged the human instinct of love by constraining the physical manifestation of sexuality. He said the provision had consigned a group of citizens to the margins and was destructive of their identities. The CJI while discussing the ambit of gender and whether it expanded beyond the biological sex of a person had on day one of the hearing said that the very notion of a man and a woman is not "an absolute based on genitals"

ASI rejigs policy on providing copies of rare pix collection to researchers

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

WITH a sudden surge in demand of rare photographs of explored or excavated remains of heritage sites and antiquities under its care, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has issued a revised policy and prices for researchers and authors.

According to the revised policy, the photographs will be provided based on the synopsis of the proposed work submitted by the applicant. However the agency has put a cap on the numbers of images.

"Not more than 25 photos per project in a calendar year will be given. ASI shall examine the synopsis and decide the number of photographs within the limit prescribed," read the policy.

Requests for the unpublished images of excavation and excavated material will be considered only if the period of five years has elapsed after the completion of the fieldwork.

A soft copy for general academic purpose will cost Rs 250 but if the picture is for commercial use, then the ASI will charge Rs 2,500. For a video clip or visuals recorded with the help of a drone, the price for three-minute footage is Rs 1,000 for general academic category but for commercial purposes, it would cost Rs 10,000. The rates will automatically be revised by five percent every year.

The national heritage watchdog has under it about 3,700 heritage sites including forts, palaces and tombs under its jurisdiction.

Besides their renovation and protection, ASI carries out excavations at the historic sites for systematic search, documentation and study of ancient monuments, archaeological sites and their remains.

The ASI maintains a record of all its activities in the form of photos and videos.

The ASI encourages and facilitates researchers to conduct studies utilising this rich collection from its photo archives. The demand to access ASI collection has been increasing over the years, said officials.

If images of artefacts kept in museums, art galleries, and private possession are required though the photo negatives that are available with the ASI, the applicant will need to seek approval from the concerned authority or individuals; the actual possessor of the article.

Growing demand from researchers over the years

ASI encourages and facilitates researchers to conduct studies utilising this rich collection from its photo archives. The demand to access ASI collection has been increasing over the years, said officials

J&K ENCOUNTER

Security forces on Sunday busted a terrorist hideout after a brief exchange of fire with the ultras in J&K's Anantnag district, police said. The militants opened fire on the security forces, an official said.

6 INJURED IN BIKE-AUTO COLLISION IN MAHA'S PALGHAR

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	42	27	Mumbai	35	29
Bhopal	43	28	Panaji	32	28
Jaipur	41	30	Patna	41	27
Amritsar	40	23	Lucknow	42	27
Chennai	39	30	Port Blair	34	28
Kolkata	36	26	Imphal	23	18
Srinagar	18	08	Chandigarh	42	23

Rift in Raj Cong on wane as Pilot's march ends today?

AICC in-charge seems to be softening his tone towards former Dy CM

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

THE Congress victory in Karnataka has had a significant impact on the ongoing internal politics in the ruling Congress in Rajasthan. State in-charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa's "soft stance" towards former Deputy Chief Minister **Sachin Pilot** has sent out buzz about a new rapprochement in the party.

Pilot, who is currently on his five-day padyatra, entered Jaipur district on Sunday, marking the fourth day of his march. Hundreds of his supporters are with him in the march under the blazing heat of May in Rajasthan.

Pilot's foot march is directed against the government of his own party, which has allegedly failed to take any concrete action against those involved in corruption during the previous Vasundhara Raje government and the paper leak cases that have repeatedly haunted the Gehlot government over the past few years. However, in his padyatra, Pilot's stance has become increasingly aggressive.

Contrary to his previous strong statements about Pilot, state in charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa seems to be softening his tone. While he acknowledged during a media conversation on Sunday that there are differences among party leaders in Rajasthan, nevertheless, he now aims to unite everyone and bring the party together. He claimed that he is working towards strengthening the state unit. He said the Congress will contest the elections in Rajasthan unitedly, just as it did in Karnataka.

On Friday, Randhawa had made it clear that Pilot's march is a personal programme, and not an official party event. He had also asserted that he is closely monitoring Pilot's visit, and a report will be submitted to party chief Mallikarjun Kharge upon his return from Karnataka.

After Randhawa's statement, there was speculation that the party leadership might make tough decisions regarding Pilot. During his media interaction, Randhawa also said that Chief Minister **Ashok Gehlot** delivered a clear speech in front of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Rajasthan, which was a significant event. "The BJP does not have any major issue in Rajasthan," Randhawa said, asserting that people were benefiting in a big way," he said

Randhawa stated that schemes such as free treatment and OPS had reached the people of Karnataka, resulting in favorable outcomes in the elections.

There is now a big buzz after Randhawa's fresh statement that, as Rahul Gandhi had stated a few months ago, both Pilot and Gehlot are being seen as assets to the party. And the top leadership will make a special effort to resolve the Gehlot-Pilot tussle and reconcile the two warring leaders in the Rajasthan Congress at the earliest.

I'm trying to unite party: AICC Secy in-charge of state

Contrary to his previous strong statements about Pilot, state in charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa seems to be softening his tone. While he acknowledged during a media conversation on Sunday that there are differences among party leaders in Rajasthan, nevertheless, he now aims to unite everyone and bring the party together. He claimed that he is working towards strengthening the state unit. He said Congress will contest the elections in Rajasthan unitedly, just as it did in Karnataka.

K'taka results jolt U'khand BJP, spoil party schedule

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

THE results of Karnataka Assembly elections shook Uttarakhand BJP and its top leaders. The debacle affected the party's scheduled celebrations over its massive victory in the civic polls in Uttar Pradesh.

The BJP refrained from celebrating at the party headquarters on Balbir Road in the capital. Political experts believe that the defeat in Karnataka will also be a challenge for the Uttarakhand BJP in the upcoming elections.

Reacting to the Karnataka assembly election results against the party, BJP state president Mahendra Bhatt told this newspaper, "We accept the mandate, although the party fought the elections in a spectacular manner, the result was not in our favour so we need to work harder." He claimed that like the civic polls in UP, the party will repeat its massive victory in Uttarakhand as well".

Speaking to this daily, BJP state spokesperson Sunita Vidyarthi Baurai said, "We have lost 38 seats due to a reduction of 0.35 vote percentage in Karnataka, but Modi's magic remains intact and people's faith is also unbreakable."

"In Uttarakhand, the BJP has taken unprecedented decisions and enacted historic laws, which will directly benefit the common man. The Uniform Civil Code is a living example of this," Spokesperson Sunita added.

Pawar calls MVA meet to discuss plans for LS polls

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

BUOYANT by a massive Congress victory in Karnataka, the opposition MVA in Maharashtra has decided to give a tough fight to the BJP in the state. Sharad Pawar called a meeting of MVA partners — the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Thackeray), Congress and the NCP — at Pawar's residence on Sunday and discussed ways to defeat the BJP in the next year's parliamentary polls.

Those who were present in the meeting included Uddhav Thackeray, Ajit Pawar, and Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole. State NCP chief Jayant Patil said like in Karnataka, they will put up a strong fight against the BJP in Maharashtra. He said all three MVA allies will field strong candidates against the BJP.

"We will soon sit for a discussion on seat-sharing. Besides, the organizational structures of the MVA will also be strengthened. We want to give a strong alternative to the people of Maharashtra," said Patil. He said they have decided to resume the MVA's Vajramut rallies. "Due to the growing heat, the MVA's Vajramut rally was suspended for an indefinite period. Very soon, we will hold a joint rally in Pune," Patil said.

Earlier NCP chief Sharad Pawar said MVA alliance partners should sit together and hold talks on seat-sharing. "Seat-sharing is a major issue that has to be resolved amicably. If it is not resolved, then many issues can crop up in the MVA," Pawar earlier said.

Sources said Pawar told MVA leaders in the meeting that the current political scenario is against the BJP. "The Congress victory in Karnataka is decisive. The message is loud and clear that the people no longer trust the BJP and its leadership. People are looking at good alternatives. Therefore, MVA should be ready to fight against the BJP and its resources. In Maharashtra as well, there is a huge undercurrent against the BJP and the Shinde government," said a senior Congress leader.

He said Karnataka elections results have boosted the morale of the Congress cadre in Maharashtra and other parts of the country. "In comparison to 2029, today, we are in better positions in the state. The secular and socialist voters of the Congress are coming back to Congress.

RAIPUR DIARY

EJAZ KAISER
Our correspondent in Chhattisgarh
ejaz@newindianexpress.com

Baghel seeks land for cultural programmes

The state government has often fostered the local culture and traditions in an attempt to bring out regional pride. CM Bhupesh Baghel in yet another initiative has written letters to his counterparts in seven states urging them to allot two acres of government land at places of national and international importance for the 'Chhattisgarh Cultural Connect' scheme. Such centres will facilitate the people of other states to become aware of the Chhattisgarhi culture, traditions, crafts, tribal living, local festivals among other things. In return, the state will also allot land to open a culture centre of the other states. The move will bring out abundant possibilities to explore tourism.

Dental surgeon attends international event

Specialised dental surgeon from the state Dr Neeraj Kumar Chandrakar was one of the two Indian doctors who shared their expertise in leadership education in a workshop that deliberated over the recent research and technology advances in prosthodontics in Italy from May 12–14. Prosthodontics is a dentist who specialises in replacement of missing teeth and restoration. As many as twenty four of them from across the world were invited to participate in the event. The discussions focussed on leadership activities in academic, scientific, and pursue excellence in research.

Muslims will also be compensated, HC told

A month after the communal violence, the Advocate General (AG) revealed to the Chhattisgarh High Court that the state government will soon take a decision regarding the compensation to the two Muslim men killed (by mob) following the clashes in Bemetra district. The response of the AG came before the division bench during the hearing of the petition filed by the wives of the two deceased minority. The violence that erupted over a trivial issue after the tussle between some children led to critical injuries to Bhuneshwar Sahu who later died. CM Bhupesh Baghel announced a government job to a family of Sahu besides Rs 10 lakh as an assistance. The petitioners in their plea sought similar compensation.

Bathinda inmates go on hunger strike demanding better facilities in prison

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

OVER two dozen inmates at the high-security Bathinda Central Jail have gone on hunger strike demanding better facilities as per the prison manual.

Around 25 inmates, including a few gangsters and the accused in the Nabha Jail break case have been on a hunger strike since Friday demanding increase in the number of phone calls and minutes to their family and lawyers, to be allowed to go outside their barracks for walks, to work on the smooth top-up of their canteen cards which is facing issues and to install television in their barracks for entertainment.

These inmates had gone on a hunger strike about fortnight ago also but ended it after assurance from jail officials. They went back on strike on Friday and plan to end it after their demands are met.

A video of Jagir Singh, father of gangster and inmate Gurpreet Singh, has gone viral in which he says that he spoke to his son on phone and was told that the inmates have no facilities whereas the Ferozepur jail have provided TVs.

A senior official of the state prisons department said that the matter pertaining to installing television in barracks is ongoing in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, as the jail inmates have filed an appeal in the HC and further action will be taken as per the court's decision. He added that as per jail manual, TV cannot be installed in barracks of gangsters or high risk criminals.

The hunger strike by inmates is not new to this jail. In 2021, after being shifted to a high-security zone, 12 gangsters had gone on a hunger strike in the same jail alleging poor quality of food.

A police official said that the case on installing television has been going on in the court. However, according to the jail manual, a TV cannot be installed in prisons, he added.

MADHYA PRADESH

4 detained for 'religious conversion'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhopal

TWO incidents of alleged religious conversion of tribals by Christian preachers kept the cops busy in tribal-dominated Shahdol district in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday.

In the first incident, a police team raided the house of a woman in Gharaula locality (Ward No. 18) in Shahdol city, following complainants about a group of Christian preachers from neighbouring Umaria and Balaghat districts encouraging religious conversion.

The group was allegedly holding community prayers of tribal men, women and children. Raiding the house, the cops, led by deputy superintendent of police Raghvendra Dwivedi, detained four persons and took out 40 men, women and children out of the house, where they had been assembled for Christian prayers.

Christian religious literature was also seized by the police from the house. The other incident happened in the Keshwahi area of Shahdol district.

VIOLENCE IN MAHA TOWN

A vehicle set on fire during clashes between two communities over a social media post, in Akola, Maharashtra, Saturday | PTI

E-bikes to curb traffic snarls in Srinagar

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

TO tackle overcrowding, traffic mess and to promote eco-friendly transport in the city, a smart-cycling initiative (public bicycle sharing system) with the slogan 'Burn Fat Not Fuel' will be launched in Srinagar by the end of this month as part of a smart city project .

Ahmedabad-based company Chartered Bikes will launch the smart-cycling initiative. Mehran Khan, Division Head for Chartered Bikes told this newspaper that Srinagar will have 100 cycling points (docking yards), where people can take bicycles on rent.

About 1,000 cycles will be available for the consumers in these 100 docking stations, he said.

Around 1k cycles will be available at 100 docking stations | ZAHOOR PUNJABI

J'khand floats boat ambulances for remote areas

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

AFTER launching country's first air ambulance service on April 28 this year, Jharkhand is set to introduce speed-boat ambulance service.

The free of cost speed-boat ambulance service will be launched at Sahibganj and will cater the requirement of over 2.5 lakh people living in the district. According to officials, Jharkhand is the first to introduce boat-ambulance service in the country.

Ram Niwas Yadav, Sahibganj, Deputy Commissioner, informed that during the monsoon season some of the panchayats of Diara and Udhwa region get inundated with water and timely transportation of patients to health centres becomes difficult. With the free boat ambulance services, the aim is to provide quick, safe and better medical facility in the region.

"This is a completely free service for anybody who wants to avail it and we have made all the arrangements, like fuel and medical facilities and boat staff in advance," the DC said.

The ambulance service will cater to the requirement of over 2.5 lakh people | EXPRESS

"Traditional boats take a lot of time to transport patients, but these speed-boats with double engines will help in quick and safe transportation. One driver and two trained medical staff will also be present for patient care," said Yadav.

As of now, two boat ambulances have been procured from a Gujarat based company under the District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT), each costing ₹29.17 lakh, he added.

The DC further added that it will be a boon for the two panchayats located on the other side of river Ganga as it was difficult to carry patients to this side.

It will also be beneficial for those who want to take their ailing family members to the medical center located at Purnia in Bihar and Malda in West Bengal, located on the other side of the river, he said. The boat ambulances are GPS enabled along with sensors to alert about the presence of any other boat in its periphery, he added.

Hailing the decision, Sahibganj Civil Surgeon Dr Ramdeo Paswan said, "The boat ambulance will have all modern facilities like first aid, ECG, oxygen inhaler, flow meter etc. Locals also praised the decision saying that if it works properly, a major hurdle in the transportation of patients will be solved.

"Being a backward district, there is literally no medical facility available in the region, except AIIMS Deoghar, but since the area is inundated in water for most of the time, it becomes difficult for us to transport the patients to the hospital on time.

It is a great initiative taken by the government and will prove to be a boon for the people in Diara and Udhwa regions in Sahibganj," said a local resident Praveen Kumar.

Trauma centres to come up along Kiratpur-Manali highway in HP

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

THE Himachal Pradesh government will set up three new traffic-cum-tourist police stations on the Kiratpur-Manali National Highway which will be ready by next month.

These centres will have emergency call boxes, high-tech CCTV cameras, automatic traffic counter-cum-classifiers, vehicle actuated speed displays and overhead driver feedback system.

To review road safety aspects on the Kiratpur-Manali NH, a meeting was held last week under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu. The CM said the four-lane highway, which is about 191 km long, will pass through three districts--Bilaspur, Mandi and Kullu.

The stations will be operated with Intelligent Traffic Management System with control toom at each police station. With this, quick police assistance will be ensured in case of accidents on the four-lane. The CM also directed the concerned departments to prepare a detailed report on the jurisdiction of these police stations.

Sukhu said that trauma centers would be marked on this four-lane road, including All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bilaspur, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Government Medical College & Hospital, Nerchowk, Mandi and regional hospitals of all the three districts.

This will ensure quick treatment to the affected in case of emergency. Arrangements for ambulances, recovery vehicles will also be made at certain places on this highway, he added.

Sukhu said that the use of advanced technology is being ensured in coordination with the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)and the state ppolice for smooth operations of traffic on this National Highway and reducing the chances of accidents.

The CM also directed officials to increase the number of display boards related to speed limits and urged the NHAI to provide financial assistance for the Integrated Command Center. Director General of Police, Sanjay Kundu said that a study will be done to make all necessary arrangements from the point of view of security at T and Y junction under this four-lane Highway.

Regional Officer, National Highways Authority of India, Abdul Basit said that this four-lane National Highway will be completely ready by June 20.

Equipped with emergency call boxes

These centres will have emergency call boxes, high-tech CCTV cameras, automatic traffic counter-cum-classifiers, vehicle actuated speed displays and overhead driver feedback system

Imran calls for nationwide protests

LAHORE

PAKISTAN'S former prime minister Imran Khan called for nationwide "freedom" protests on Sunday, after his brief arrest and detention this week triggered deadly unrest.

The one-time cricket superstar — who has been tied up in dozens of legal cases since being ousted from power in April last year — was freed on bail on Friday after his detention was declared unlawful by the Supreme Court. Enraged by the arrest, supporters set fire to government buildings, blocked roads, and damaged property belonging to the military, which they blame for Imran's downfall. "Freedom does not come easily. You have to snatch it. You have to sacrifice for it," he said in an address broadcast on YouTube Saturday night. He called for supporters to hold protests "at the end of your streets and villages" across the country on Sunday evening for one hour starting at 5.30 pm.

Supporters of Imran Khan protest in Lahore on Sunday | AP

After five days of tumult across Pakistan, Sunday morning was quiet, but Imran has also pledged to return to campaigning on Wednesday for immediate elections.

For months, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party leader has waged a campaign of defiance against the military.

His arrest on Tuesday came just hours after he was rebuked for claiming senior officials were involved in an assassination attempt against him last year. Pakistan's powerful military has directly ruled the country off and on for nearly half of its 75-year history and continues to wield power over the political system. "The army chief's actions have made our military bad. It is because of him, not because of me," Imran said from his home in Lahore, although it was unclear whether he meant the serving chief, or his predecessor, whom Imran has held responsible for his ouster. He previously told reporters that "one man, the army chief" was behind his arrest.

But Imran distanced himself from the attacks against the military's installations at the protests, denying his party workers were involved and calling for an independent investigation into the violence.

The army, which denies the accusations made by Imran, warned against attempts to create "misperceptions" against the institution. *AFP*

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture, Government of Andhra Pradesh inviting Expression of Interest from all the manufacturers of Agricultural Drones for empanelment for supply of Agricultural Drones to the selected beneficiaries under Govt subsidy schemes in 2023-24. Details of empanelment notification and documents are provided in department website **www.apagrisnet.gov.in.** Last date for receiving applications for empanelment is 25/05/2023.

Sd/- Special Commissioner of Agriculture

DIPR No.2080PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22, Dt: 13/05/2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

Samsidhi International School located at No. 9, 1st Main, Ramanna Garden, Ramchandrapura, Vidyaranyapura Post, Bangalore – 97, has changed the name from **Mount Litera Zee School** to **Samsidhi International School** based on the circular **No:C1.PDA /100/2023.** Date:**28-03-2023** issued by the Karnataka State Education Board Department.

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

IDFC FIRST Bank

(erstwhile Capital First Limited now merged with IDFC Bank Limited)
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 7th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.
Authorized Officer – Samson Castelino | Contact Number- 9164040717

PROPERTY FOR SALE UNDER PROVISIONS OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002 BY PRIVATE TREATY

1.Whereas the Authorized Officer of **IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited now merged with IDFC Bank Limited)** has taken the Possession u/s 13(4) of the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security interest Act, 2002 (The SARFAESI Act, 2002) of the Property Being at **Flat no G-06, "G.M.Reddy's Royale, Bearing Survey No. 74/3, Khata No. 1133/1120/1220/74/3, Bellandur Village, Varthurhobli, Bangalore- 560103** ("the Secured Asset") with respect to **Loan Account No. 10048609514 & 10048719968** of **M/S DNI Home Theatre (Borrower), Mr. Alex Clement Lewis and Mrs. Seema Anitha Pais (Co-borrower).** The Authorized Officer has received an expression of interest from a prospective purchaser towards purchase of the above-mentioned Secured Asset under the SARFAESI Act. Now, the Authorized Officer is hereby giving the Notice to Sale of the aforesaid property by Private Treaty in terms of rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. The Sale will be on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS". The Date of Sale under Private Treaty is fixed for **05.06.2023** and the Reserve Price fixed for the sale is **Rs. 67,00,000/- (Rupees Fifty lakhs only).** The Borrower and Co Borrower are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned in the demand notice i.e **Rs. 91,38,198/- (Rupees Ninety- One Lakhs Thirty-Eight Thousand One hundred and Ninety-nine only)** along with interest and ancillary expenses before **05.06.2023**, failing which the property will be sold by Private Treaty.

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
(erstwhile Capital First Limited now merged with IDFC Bank Limited)

Date : 15.05.2023
Place : Bangalore

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to public that my client **Sri. Anand .M** and **Sasikala .V** states that : **1.** Sale deed dated: 19-03-2013 executed by Muniyamma, Muniraj, Pillachannamma and her Son Devaraj, Pillamma and Puttaraj and Nagamma in favour of Narasamma vide document No.5890/2012-13 in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Jala, Bengaluru & **2.** Gift deed dated 23-12-2013 executed by Narasamma in favour of Govindaraju .L vide document No.9179/2013-14 in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Yelahanka, Bengaluru is lost and same was lost by previous owner Manjunath .S.

If any body get any information about the said document/in the possession of the same/having any claim/interest in the schedule property may write/contact to the undersigned **within 15 days** with documentary proof failing which my clients will treat the certified copy of the said document as original and objections received thereafter is not binding upon my client.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Residential Property bearing Site No.2, BBMP Khata No. 6930/1830/1326/98/98/47/2 Old Khata No. 1830/1326/98/98/47/2 situated at Kattigenahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk.

Measuring: East to West: 25-0' Ft, **North to South:** 40-0' Ft, Measuring 1000 sft along with house thereon **Bounded on: East by:** Road, **West by:** Private Property, **North by:** Site No.1, **South by:** Site No.3

POORNIMA .K.S, Advocate.
2710, 6th Main, 2nd Stage, K.S. Layout, Bangalore-560078. Mb: 9886244736.

CHENNAI METRO RAIL LIMITED

(A Joint Venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of Tamil Nadu)
METROS
Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER on Rolling Basis

Tender 01	Tender cum auction for Licensing of Advertisement Rights on Piers & Portals along the Corridor I & II of Phase 1 & it's extension in CMRL Network
Contract No	BD/P-III/452/2023/04
Tender 02	Tender cum auction for Licensing of Semi-Naming Rights on selected Metro Stations of Corridor I & II of Phase 1
Contract No	CMRL/BD/SNR/2023/490/05
The above tender (01 & 02) documents downloaded from **15/05/2023 17:00 hrs** through e-tendering website **https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.**	
Tender 03	Tender cum Auction for Licensing of built-up bare shell Shops / Office Spaces located at Selected Elevated and UG Metro Stations along Corridor- 1 & 2 of Phase-I and its Extensions
Contract No	CMRL/BD/Retail-6/2023/482/05
Tender 04	Tender cum Auction for Licensing of Street Level Kiosk space at various Metro stations in Phase-I and its extension, Chennai
Contract No	CMRL/BD/Kiosk-11/Kiosk/2023/489/02
The above tender (03&04) documents downloaded from **18/05/2023 17:00 hrs** through e-tendering website **https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app**	

For due date of Bid submission, date of Bid opening and complete details, please visit e-procurement website: **http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.** The tender will continue in rolling basis. Prospective bidders are required to periodically check the e-procurement website to know the currently available inventories. The available inventories will be updated and the process will continue till award of all contracts. Any Corrigendum/Addendum to this publication, if any, would appear only on above mentioned website and will not be published in newspapers.
Tender inviting Authority: Chief General Manager (P&BD), Chennai Metro Rail Limited, MetroS, Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035. Phone - 044-2437 8000 / www.chennaimetrorail.org. E-mail: krishnan.rm@cmrl.in

Chief General Manager (P&BD)
Chennai Metro Rail Limited

DIPR/2574/Tender/2023

"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்"

TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION

Head Office, 12, Thambusamy Road, Kilpauk, Chennai - 600 010.
Ph. NO. (044) 26426773 Email id : tncsc.tn@nic.in
CIN:U15137TN1972SGC006157

Short-E-TENDER NOTICE

No. : BS6/018043/2023 **Dated : 12.05.2023**
Short E-Tender No: BS3/0018043/2023-TNCSC/23-24

Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation invites Online electronic tender for the **"Purchase of 20,000 Metric Tonnes of "Tur dal (Split - Husked & Fatka) [Indigenous] / Tur Dal (Split Husked-Imported) / Lentil locally known as Canadian Yellow Lentil (Split - Husked & Laired No.2) / Lentil locally known as Canadian Yellow Lentil (Whole - Husked & Laired No.2) as per Agmark specification"**

Complete short e-tender document can be viewed and downloaded through **https:tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**

The bidders have to participate online bidding only with Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-II or Class-III

Last Date and Time for Online Submission : **upto 11.00 A.M. on 30.05.2023**

DIPR/2582/Tender/2023 **Managing Director**

சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

GATISHAKTI UNIT / TIRUCHCHIRAPPALLI DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No. GS-TPJ-09-2023 Dated: 09.05.2023

For and on behalf of the President of India, The Chief Project Manager / Gatishakti Unit / Tiruchchirappalli invites ONLINE tenders for the following works.

Item No.	Tender No.	Name of the works
1	GS-TPJ-09-2023-01	Civil works related to Up-gradation of Thanjavur (TJ) Railway Junction under 'Amrit Bharat Station Scheme'
2	GS-TPJ-09-2023-02	Civil works related to Up-gradation of Thiruvarur (TVR) Railway Junction under 'Amrit Bharat Station Scheme'
3	GS-TPJ-09-2023-03	Electrical works related to Up-gradation of Thiruvarur (TVR) Railway Junction under 'Amrit Bharat Station Scheme'
4	GS-TPJ-09-2023-04	Electrical works related to Up-gradation of Thanjavur (TJ) Railway Junction under 'Amrit Bharat Station Scheme'

Item No.	Tender No.	Cash value (in ₹)	Validity offer	Closing Date & Time	Period of completion (in months)
1	GS-TPJ-09-2023-01	8,77,09,219.91	60 days	31.05.2023 11.00 hrs.	8 months
2	GS-TPJ-09-2023-02	5,05,06,637.15	60 days	31.05.2023 11.00 hrs.	7 months
3	GS-TPJ-09-2023-03	80,09,768.00	60 days	31.05.2023 11.00 hrs.	7 months
4	GS-TPJ-09-2023-04	1,48,64,964.00	60 days	31.05.2023 11.00 hrs.	8 months

If the date of opening of tenders happens to be a declared holiday at a later date, the tenders will be opened on the next working day at the stipulated time.

The detailed Tender Notices, Tender document along with terms & conditions and if any corrigendum to tenders issued, can be accessed through **https://www.ireps.gov.in**

Follow us on : twitter.com/GMSRailway

SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED

SHRIRAM Finance

Registered Office: Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600032

Branch Office : 2 nd Floor, Upstairs SBI Bank, Vidyuthnagar Circle, Ananthapuramu.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

We, M/s. Shriram Finance Limited (formerly known as "Shriram City Union Finance Limited" amalgamated with **Shriram Transport Finance Limited** and converted as **Shriram Transport Finance Limited** as per the orders of NCLT Bench-II Chennai dated 09.11.2022) and thereafter obtained the approval to rename as **Shriram Finance Ltd** (Ministry of Corporate Finance letter dated 30.11.2022), is a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 and also registered with RBI to do Non-Banking Finance business having its registered office at Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600032.

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of **Shriram Finance Limited (SFL)** under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (said Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (said Rules) issued demand notices to the Borrowers details of which are mentioned in the table below to repay the amount mentioned in the said demand notices. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules, on this **09th May' 2023.**

Borrowers Names and Address : 1. B. Sangameswara Babu, S/o B. Shivanandam, aged about :: 57years, Flat No.305, 3rd Floor, Sri Sai PriyaResidency, 13 th Cross, Sarakki, J.P Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka-560078. **2. B. Indira, W/o B. Sangameswara Babu,** aged about :: 55years, Flat No. 305, 3 rd Floor, Sri Sai Priya Residency, 13 th Cross, Sarakki, J.P Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka- 560078. **3. G. Satyanarayana, S/o G. Marenna,** aged about :: 67years, D.No. 3/160, Near Panchayat Office, Pilligundla Colony, Kakkalapalli, Anantapur Town & Dist., 515001. (DIED), **4. G. Rama Devi, W/o Late G. Satyanarayana,** aged about :: 50 years, D.No. 35-127,Opp: Ananthapur Tennis Acadamy, Near Gowrav Gardens, Pilligundla Colony, Anantapur Town & Dist., 515001. **5.G. Nandini, D/o Late G. Satyanarayana,** aged about :: 30 years, D.No. 35-127, Opp: Ananthapur Tennis Acadamy, Near Gowrav Gardens, Pilligundla Colony, Anantapur Town & Dist., 515001. **6. G. Bharathi, D/o Late G. Satyanarayana,** aged about :: 28 years, D.no. 35-127, Opp: Ananthapur Tennis Acadamy, Near Gowrav Gardens, Pilligundla Colony, Anantapur Town & Dist., 515001. **7. G. Sai Narasimha, S/o Late G. Satyanarayana,** aged about :: 25 years, D.No. 35-127, Opp: Ananthapur Tennis Acadamy, Near Gowrav Gardens, Pilligundla Colony, Anantapur Town & Dist.,515001.

Amount Due As Per Demand Notice: To pay Rs. 2,57,85,012/- (Rupees Two Crore Fifty Seven Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand Four Hundred and Twelve only) under reference of Loan A/c No:- ANAN2TF1806270002
Demand Notice Dated : 23.02.2023

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Ananthapuramu District, Anantapur Sub District, Ananthapur Mandal, Ananatapur City and Municipal Corporation , Sangameswara Nagar, Ward No. 28, T.S No. 1964, a total extent of AC.4.80cents and in it anextent of AC.1.80 cents and in it an extent of AC.0.95 cents site along with Sangamesh Function Hall constructed there in bearing Door no. 28/609. **Bounded On :: EAST ::** Remaing the site of D. Sangameswara Babu in the same T.S Number and Site of B. Indira and Others, **WEST ::** Remaing the site of D. Sangameswara Babu in the same T.S Number and Site of Land in T.S no. 1962. **NORTH ::** Vanka, **SOUTH ::** 20ft width Road to reach sangamesh Function Hall in the same T.S Number and Property of others in the same T.S Number. Within these an extent of 4598 sq.yards of site along with constructed Zinc Sheet roofed Auditorium in an extent of 8300 sq.ft and RCC roofed Dining Hall and also Zinc Sheet roofed shed in an extent of 490 sq.ft along with all fixtures therein such as AC's Generators and all other fittings.

This notice is also hereby to caution the general public at large that the **Authorized Officer of SFL** is in the lawful **Symbolic Possession** of the Immovable Property mentioned herein above and the Borrowers or any person shall not after receipt of this notice transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise deal with/ alienate any of the above mentioned secured assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of **SFL.**

Date : 14.05.2023 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place : ANANTAPUR/ZO. **Shriram Finance Limited**

St. MARK'S ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOL

PAMUR, Prakasam Dist. AP.

— We required urgently for —

PRIMARY & HIGH SCHOOL INCHARGE AND PRIMARY TEACHERS

(except Telugu & Hindi) for reputed School in Andhra Pradesh. Attractive salary + free food and accommodation.

Contact : 9663357420

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General public that my Client Jagan is Purchasing the Property bearing Western portion of Site No.120, old Assessment No.135, Then 135/2, New No.135/3, Khatha No.255 measuring East to West 15 ft and North to South 40 ft total measuring 600 sq ft Situated at Laggere Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, previously Dasarahalli Limits, presently within the limits of BBMP Ward No.41 from 1.Mrs.Shakunthala @ Sagunthalammal Manokaran 2.Mr.Ravindra 3.Mr. Ramesh Manokaran.

If any person having right, title, interest or Objection in the schedule property must notify they undersigned documentary proof, thereon Within 07 days of this publication failing which it shall be deemed that the schedule property is not encumbrance and my client shall proceed within transaction.

Deepa A.M, Advocate,
KAR/474/2012
No.6, 80 feet Road,
Chandra Layout, Bangalore 560040

Bangalore
Dated:15.05.2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

Samsidh International School located at 582/1, Kalkere Main Rd, near Banjara Layout, Horamavu Post, Dodda Kempaiah Layout, Horamavu, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560043, has changed the name from **Mount Litera Zee School** to **Samsidh International School** based on the circular No : **DPI-CPIOC7-3(SCNC) /2/2023-No:977964,** dated **24-02-2023** issued by the Karnataka State Education Board Department.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby notified that Sri. M. Rajkumar Shri Shrimal, son of Late Shri Shrimal residing at No. 1, 24th Cross, near Dhobhi Ghat, BSK 2nd Stage, Bangalore - 560072 has represented that he is the sole and absolute owner in possession of Residential Site bearing House List No. 432, Khata No. 118, situated at Anjanapura Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, morefully described in the Schedule written hereunder, having obtained by a Sale Deed dated 30/03/1994 executed in his favour by Habhil Saifuddin Roopwal through his GPA Holder Sri. Abbas Ali Bohra, registered as Document No. 14737 / 1994-1994 in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Jayanagar (Kengeri) Bangalore. It is also notified that Sri. M Rajkumar Shri Shrimal has, unfortunately, lost the Original Sale Deed dated 30/03/1994 and a Police Compliant has been lodged with Police Authorities on 01/05/2023 vide Lost Report No. 0550226/2023. The Public are hereby requested to return the Original Sale Deed dated 30/03/1994, if found, to Sri. M Rajkumar Shri Shrimal or the undersigned within 15 days hereof. The Public are hereby notified to lodge their claims in respect of the schedule property, if they any, with the undersigned within 15 days hereof.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing house list number 432 Katha Number 118, situated at Anjanapura Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore, measuring East to West (59 + 42 / 2), North to South (46 + 40 / 2) totally measuring in all 2171 sq ft and bounded on the;

East by : Road, West by : Site No. 433, North by : Road, South by : Site Nos 455 and 456.

Kesthur & Kesthur, Advocates
No. 126, 10th A Main, 1st Block,
Jayanagar, Bangalore - 560011.
sudarshan@kesthur.net
9945778664 | 9972589589

KERALA STATE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

KSIDC

(A GOVERNMENT OF KERALA UNDERTAKING)
Keston Road | Kowdiar | Trivandrum | Kerala – 695 003
Ph: 0471 - 2318922 | Fax: 0471 – 2315893 | E- mail: enquiry@ksidcmail.org

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Limited (KSIDC) invites e-Tenders from technology companies for the supply, customization and implementation of Core Financial Services Solution for the corporation. The last date for submission of e-tenders will be 3:00 p.m. on 05.06.2023. **For more details kindly visit the e-tender website: https://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in/. For any kind of clarifications in this regard kindly e-mail to enquiry@ksidcmail.org.**

Thiruvananthapuram
15.05.2023

Sd/-
MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd.

KMML Spreading Splendour

(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam - 691 583
Ph : 91-476-2651215 to 2651217 email: contact@kmml.com, URL : www.kmml.com

TENDER NOTICE

No	Tender Id	Name of the Work
1	2023_KMML_575578_1	Supply, Installation, Testing and commissioning of DCS for New CAS and WTPon turnkey basis.
2	2023_KMML_575455_1	For the supply of 15 MT of Zirconium Ortho Sulphate
3	2023_KMML_575186_1	For the supply of Low-Density Polythene (LDPE) Film / Sheet
4	2023_KMML_574845_1	For the transportation of Aluminium Trihydrate-1088MT from our suppliers delivery point at Damanjodi, Orissa to Titanium Dioxide Pigment Unit, Chavara
5	2023_KMML_574520_1	For the supply of High Purity Liquid Argon

Chavara 12.05.2023 **Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd**

MAHAGENCO — E-Tender Notice

Chandrapur Super Thermal Power Station **MAHAGENCO**, invites Proposals from reputed and experienced Companies to Participate in the Competitive bidding Process to following Tenders.

S.N.	Tender NO (Rfx No) / Descricption / Estimated Cost in Rs.
1.	**3000038314/ Annual** Contract for Monitoring of Coal Flow & chute choke-up removal in zone-B along with allied works at CHP-A, CSTPS, for 2 years/ **Rs. 62647649.80**

Above floated tender published in **MAHAGENCO online Portal.** For the detailed Tender document, interested bidders should visit SRM Website **https://eprocurement.mahagenco.in** for (Sr. No. 01) For any query Contact No. **8554991818.**

CHIEF ENGINEER (O&M)
CSTPS, CHANDRAPUR

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** (Formerly known as Janalakshmi Financial Services Limited)., under the Securitization And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued **demand notices** to the borrower(s)/ Co-borrower(s) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned against the respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates as mentioned in the said notices within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notices, along with future interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/ or realisation.

Sr. No.	Loan No.	Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	13(2) Notice Date/ Outstanding Due (in Rs.) as on	Date/ Time & Type of Possession
1	31879440000643	1) Mrs. Kanchana G, 2) Mrs. Ramya G	08.03.2023 **Rs.4,82,913.50** (Rupees Four Lakh Eighty Two Thousand Nine Hundred Thirteen and Paisa Fifty Only) **due as on 07-03-2023**	**Date: 12-05-2023 Time: 12:15 P.M. Symbolic Possession**
	Description of the Property: All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Site No.30, BBMP Khatha No.2/1/30 measuring East to West 30 Ft. and North to South 40 Ft. total measuring 1200 Sq.ft. Situated at Myadarahalli Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Presently within the limits of BBMP and **Bounded on: East by:** Others Property, **West by:** 25 Ft. Road, **North by:** Property belongs to Durgamma, **Sorth by:** Property belongs to Muninarasamma. Measuring East to West 30 Ft. and North to South 40 Ft. Total Measuring 1200 Sq.ft.			

Whereas, the Borrower's/ Co-borrowers'/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above have failed to repay the amounts due, notice is hereby given to the Borrower's mentioned herein above in particular and to the Public in general that the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** has **taken symbolic possession** of the properties/ secured assets described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the dates mentioned above. The Borrower's/ Co-borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid properties/ Secured Assets and any dealings with the said properties/ Secured Assets will be subject to the charge of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited.**

Place: Bangalore **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Date: 15.05.2023 **For. Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK (A scheduled commercial bank)

Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

SBI State Bank of India — DEMAND NOTICE

SARB Thane(11697) Branch 1st floor Kerom Plot no A-112 Circle, Road No 22 Wagle Industrial Estate Thane (W) 400604 email id sbi.11697@sbi.co.in

A notice is hereby given that the following Borrower/ Jamnahari P Ltd., have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). The notices were issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 on their last known addresses, but they have been returned unserved and as such they are hereby informed by way of this public notice.

Name & address of the Borrowers/ guarantors	Details of Properties / Address of Secured Assets to be enforced	1)Date of Demand Notice 2) Date of NPA 3) Amount outstanding
1) **Jamnahari P Ltd.,** A)14, Nav Nandan Industrial Estate, Asha Nagar, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 B) No.31, Navnandan Industrial Premises, Near Sai Dham, Asha Nagar, Off LBS Road, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 C) 1103, A wing, Lotus View Hill CHS, Whispering Meadows, Balarajeshwar Road, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 2) **Shri Yash Mahesh Kataria,** 1103, A wing, Lotus View Hill CHS, Whispering Meadows, Balarajeshwar Road, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 3) **Smt Chetana Mahesh Kataria,** A)1103, A wing, Lotus View Hill CHS, Whispering Meadows, Balarajeshwar Road, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 B) 296, 4th B Main, 16th Cross, J P Nagar, 4 face, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560078, 4) **Shri Amit Mahesh Kataria,** 1103, A wing, Lotus View Hill CHS, Whispering Meadows, Balarajeshwar Road, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 5) **Shri Mahesh Haridas Kataria,** 1103, A wing, Lotus View Hill CHS,Whispering Meadows, Balarajeshwar Road, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 B) 296, 4th B Main, 16th Cross, J P Nagar, 4 face, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560078	Flat No.1103, 11th floor, A wing, Bldg No.A1, Lotus View Hill CHS Ltd, Whispering Meadows, survey No 254 (Part), City survey No 20/B, Balarajeshwar Road, LBS Marg, Mulund West, Mumbai 400080 (Covered under Doc No.KRL-4-4107-2014 dated 15.05.2014 adm about 723 sq ft Carpet area)	1) Date of Notice 09.05.2023 2) Date of NPA 19.07.2021 3) Amount outstanding (as on the date of Demand notice) . 1,80,48,916.00 (Rupees one crore eighty lakhs forty eight thousand nine hundred sixteen only) as on 08.05.2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrower(s) and /or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable)are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of this notice under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security interest Act, 2002.
The Borrowers attention is invited to provision of sub section (8)of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Date: 15.05.2023 **R N Akulwar**
Place: Thane **Authorized Officer**
For, State Bank of India

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Hutti-584115, Raichur Dist, Karnataka State, Tele: 08537-275463, 276339, Fax: (08537)275048, e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com Website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION No.62/23-24 Dt: 15.05.2023

(Through e-Procurement Portal only)

Tenders are invited by "The Dy. General Manager (Materials)" for the procurement of following items from reputed manufacturers/authorized dealers as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Description	Approx. Value Rs. in Crore	EMD in Rs.
1	Supply of LDD&SDD 3 mtr. **HGML/2022-23/IND3462/CALL-2**	1.06	1,60,000/-
2	**Procurement of Sodium cyanide 98% purity. HGML/2022-23/IND3501.**	9.21	13,82,400/-
3	**Drilling of Boreholes of 6" and 8" from surface and at underground. HGML/2022-23/OW/WORK_INDENT382 /CALL-3**	2.72	4,09,000/-
4	**Procurement of 125mm FORGED STEEL GRINDING MEDIA BALLS. HGML/2022-23/IND3499.**	8.40	12,60,000/-
5	**Procurement of 65mm FORGED STEEL GRINDING MEDIA BALLS. HGML/2022-23/IND3498.**	8.40	12,60,000/-

Calendar of events: **(1)** Pre-Bid Meetings(Zoom) : **30.05.2023 for Sl.No.1 at 10.30AM Sl.no.2 at 11.00 AM Sl.No.3 at 11.30 AM Sl.No.4&5 at 12.00PM. (2)** Last date for receipt of tender: **14.06.2023 at 4.00 P.M. (3)** Opening of Technical Bid on: **17.06.2023 at 10.00 A.M.** For further details interested bidders are advised to logon to website **https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in e-procurement portal.

Sd/- General Manager (Tech)

"LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA"

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK

(A scheduled commercial bank)

Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 &12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangala Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

E-AUCTION NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE THROUGH E-AUCTION UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT (SARFAESI ACT) 2002, READ WITH PROVISO RULE 8(6) & 9 OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002.

The undersigned as authorised officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** has **taken possession** of the following property in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(4) of the SARFAESI ACT. The Borrower in particular and public at large are informed that online auction (e-auction)of the mortgage property in the below mentioned account for realisation of dues of the Bank will be held on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS "** and **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** on the date as prescribed as here under.

Sr. No.	Loan Account Number	Name of Original Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor	Date of 13-2 Notice	Date of Possession	Present Outstanding balance as on 12.05.2023	Date & Time of Inspection of the property	Reserve Price in INR	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in INR	Date and Time of E-Auction	Last date TIME & Place for submission of Bid
1	30198640002186	**1) M/s. Sri Durga Constructions** Represented by its Proprietor **Mr. Kiran Kumar, 2) Mr. Kiran Kumar** Proprietor **M/s. Durga Constructions, 3) Mrs. Nivedhitha Kiran Kumar**	17-01-2022	28-03-2023	**Rs.62,92,265/-** (Rupees Sixty Two Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Five Only)	**22.05.2023 Time 09:30 AM to 05:00 PM**	**Rs. 1,82,07,000/-** (Rupees One Crore Eighty Two Lakh Seven Thousand Only)	**Rs.18,20,700/-** (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Twenty Thousand Seven Hundred Only)	**31.05.2023 Time: 02:00 PM**	**30.05.2023 Till 5.00 PM Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd., Head Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.**
	Details of Secured Assets: All that piece and parcel of the property House bearing Sy.No.217/1, Measuring 27 Guntas includes 3 Guntas Kharab Land Situated at Hullahalli Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore District and together **Bounded on: East by:** Sy.No.217/2, **West by:** Sy.No.218, **North by:** Sy.No.216, **South by:** Sy.No.219.									

The properties are being held on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS"** & **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** and the E-Auction will be conducted **'On Line'.** The auction will be conducted through the Bank's approved service provider **M/s. 4 Closure** at the web portal **https://bankauctions.in** & **www.foreclosureindia.com.** For more information and For details, help, procedure and online training on e-auction, prospective bidders may contact **M/s. 4 Closure; Contact Mr. Bhaskar Naidu Contact Number: 8142000809/ 8142000061. Email id: info@bankauctions.in / subbarao@bankauctions.in.**

For further details on terms and conditions to take part in e-auction proceedings and any for any query relating to property please contact **Jana Small Finance Bank authorized officers Mr. B Sreejith (Mob No.8050149617) email: babu.sreejith@janabank.com, Mr. Ranjan Naik (9590858249) email: ranjan.naik@janabank.com.** To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorised Officer, there are no encumbrances on the properties. However the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of property put on prior to submitting their bid. No conditional bid will be accepted. This is also a notice to the above named borrowers/Guarantor's/Mortgagors about e-auction scheduled for the mortgaged properties. The Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of auction, failing which the property will be sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost.

Date: 15.05.2023, Place: Bangalore Rural **Sd/- Authorized Officer, Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**

₹23,152 cr have been invested in Indian equities in May till now by foreign investors due to lower chances of further rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve.

NPS payout can match old pension system: PFRDA chairman

Though NPS cannot offer the indexation benefit, with the returns it has generated in the last 14 years, it remains a very competitive pension product

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

AMID the ongoing debate over National Pension System (NPS) and the Old Pension System(OPS), and states pulling out of the NPS, state government employees' assets under management (AUM) in NPS went up by 25% in 2022-23.

Chairman of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Deepak Mohanty in an interaction with TNIE said that the number of state government employees in NPS also went up by 9% in FY23.

Though refusing to get drawn into the NPS versus OPS debate, PFRDA chairman did say that defined benefit plans like the OPS are not sustainable in the long run.

He says that globally there is a move towards fully-funded schemes, and even if some countries may have defined benefit plans, they are funded largely through payroll taxes.

NPS could be as good as OPS

The chairman of the NPS regulator said NPS could offer similar monthly payouts as the old pension system. "Under the old pension system, you get 50% of your last drawn pay. If the accumulation under NPS is for a reasonable period, say around 30 years, our assessment is that if you annuitise the full corpus at the time of retirement, you can almost get around 50% of the last drawn salary," says Mohanty, who took over the reins of PFRDA in March this year.

With several state governments implementing the old pension system, there has been a raging debate over the sustainability of such a move. Under the OPS, the pension corpus is funded by the employer (in case of government employees, government funds the corpus). The employee gets 50% of the last withdrawn salary plus dearness allowance as pension. The DA is revised every two years.

Deepak Mohanty, Chairman, PFRDA

The PFRDA chairman admitted that NPS cannot offer the indexation benefit, that is revision of pension amount to adjust for inflation.

However, Mohanty says with the kind of returns that NPS has generated in the last 14 years (since NPS was opened for the private sector), it remains a very competitive pension product in the market.

"NPS as a scheme is very attractive because it has generated competitive returns. So, if you look at the NPS equity scheme, it has given 12% CAGR over 14 years. The scheme for central government employees has generated 9.4%, and that for the state governments - 9.3% over 14 years. Compared with any benchmark in the market, these are highly competitive returns," reiterates the chairman.

NPS has generated competitive returns

Chairman of PFRDA Deepak Mohanty said globally there is a move towards fully-funded schemes, and even if some countries may have defined benefit plans, they are funded largely through payroll taxes. NPS as a scheme is very attractive because it has generated competitive returns. The scheme for central government employees has generated 9.4%.

Need for awareness about NPS

However, the chairman rues the fact that there is severe lack of awareness about retirement saving in general and NPS and its benefits in particular.

"Nobody thinks about retirement, nobody wants to get old – that is the unfortunate part. And once you delay it, it could be too late. Ultimately it is the power of compounding (that helps you build a large retirement corpus). Start young, put in a little amount and that grows into a huge corpus, and you get a decent pension," says Mohanty.

He feels there is a need to nurture the idea of retirement savings, and that the PFRDA as a regulator is planning to do so. It wants to engage more with corporates and their HR departments, trade bodies, etc.

While PFRDA is working on creating awareness about NPS, it also expects the fund managers and intermediaries to do so.

Mohanty informed TNIE that it has brought in retirement planners, who are imparting knowledge through regular awareness camps. The pension regulator has also allowed agents to sell NPS schemes so that it can reach more people.

"General pension literacy should also improve. Those who can afford must know that one (pension) scheme is not enough. If one thinks that one has EPF and that will see him/her through, that is not the case," says Mohanty, adding that people need to have access to multiple social security or old age income schemes.

Untapped market

The PFRDA chairman says there is a lot of untapped market for NPS.

This scheme was started with government officials and now it is open for all. He feels that going forward, the growth in NPS will be driven by the private sector – individuals and corporates.

"We see from the NPS data there is gender imbalance partly because more men are in formal employment than women. The question is, those who can afford why not give it to the spouse. The threshold is also so low that with ₹1,000 (a year) one can open an NPS account," he says.

He also says that uptake among youngsters is low partly because they go for employee provident fund (EPF) as the default option.

MONEY MATTERS

WHY INVESTING IN REAL ESTATE GOT INTERESTING

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

THE recently closed initial public offering of Nexus Select Trust, a real estate investment trust or REIT, shows investors are on to something. The public offering was oversubscribed across investor categories of retail, high-net-worth individuals and institutional investors. A few real estate investment trusts are already listed, like Embassy and Mindspace.

REITs are a new way of investing in commercial real estate. Instead of buying physical property, you buy a share of large commercial real estate properties. These companies are in the business of renting commercial property and distributing the rent among unit holders. REITs, by definition, are supposed to share 90% of the rental income with unitholders. Based on your income slab, the post-tax yield was in the range of 7.2% to 7.4%. That is much higher than the average 5% offered by fixed deposits. As a result, the issue was oversubscribed.

Indian households are a market of savers. They prefer real estate and gold for wealth creation. In comparison to the population of the country, barely 10% of households own financial assets for investment. Fixed deposits are preferred over equity or debt within financial assets held by households, banks, and companies. If you are among the group of savers and wish to move to invest, you need to break that barrier. You need to invest in financial assets more than physical assets.

If you intend to preserve wealth merely, your approach is correct. If you are considering buying a property to rent out, you must think twice about that. Your idea of investing and generating a rental income is good, but you must also consider the entry and exit. If you own REIT, you get a better post-tax return than the fixed deposits and an efficient entry and exit mechanism through the stock market. You do not have to maintain the property or spend time creating rental agreements every 11 months.

The real estate market in India is perking up. Riding on the back of robust economic growth, investment from foreign and local investors is surging. India's real estate market got a record foreign investment in 2022. "Equity investments grew by nearly 33% Y-o-Y in 2022 to $7.8 billion," said a report by CBRE, a global real estate research firm. "These are the highest annual investment inflows recorded in India to date, exceeding the pre-pandemic (2019) levels by over 22%," the report adds.

Over the next few years, the Indian economy is expected to grow at over 6% against an average of 2.5% growth globally. That presents an opportunity for real estate sector development and growth. CBRE estimates that the office space stock sold in India doubled over the past decade to 820 million sq ft and is likely to cross 1 billion sq ft by 2025. Shopping centres, like the ones owned by Nexus Select, doubled since 2012 to cross 75 million sq ft and are likely to cross 95 million sq ft by 2025. In addition to that, residential units and logistics real estate are likely to witness a similar surge.

For those interested in investing in property for renting out and generating an income, you must look at options like REIT. If you sit with your financial advisor, you must weigh the cost-benefit associated with owning a physical asset and renting it out. Even after that evaluation, go ahead if you feel you need to own a physical asset. However, there are new, more effortless ways to generate a relatively risk-free return on investment now through REITs.

Real estate investment is tricky. You need to get the timing right. Like analysing stocks or mutual funds, keeping track of property prices is complicated. Prices could stay stagnant for a decade and surge suddenly or vice versa. If you can generate a return better than fixed deposits without taking too much risk, you must look at that option. India's growth could be your chance to create a portfolio of assets that could help you beat inflation and create wealth.

MONEY-WISE

THE ROAD TO WEALTH CREATION VIA INVESTING OR TRADING ?

FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR

Head of LKW-India. He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com (Views expressed here are personal)

AT this point in time, there are dime a dozen reports about Artificial Intelligence or AI replacing humans and the increasing possibility of millions across the globe losing their jobs.

It was against this backdrop that I recently read a report of a tech company in the USA holding a lavish party in a fancy hotel for its employees and then following it up with an email terminating the services of 30% of the very same employees.

Reading this, took my mind back to around 1998 when one of the biggest Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) did the same in Mumbai. In fact, the employees thought they were leaving the party at one of India's premier Five Star hotels with Gift Vouchers. They soon realised that what they mistook for Gift Vouchers in fancy envelopes were actually Termination Letters and final severance pay cheques.

They also realised that the FII had used the party that ran from noon to the early evening hours to lock down its office and shut its Indian operations. Every employee of that FII lost her/his job that day.

I remember this day, dating back a quarter century now very well for three reasons - firstly, a very close friend used to work there, secondly, the market crashed that day in the last hour of trade as they dumped all their shares as part of closing their Indian operations and last but not least, I lost heavily as I had an outstanding long trading position on a premier FMCG company whose share price rarely fluctuated too sharply.

Its share price tanked over 100 points that day and I worsened matters for myself by making the classic mistake of doubling my position once it shed 50 points. This was a classic case of 'Catching a Falling Knife' in the market.

I learnt a hard lesson that day. The very next morning, I changed my investment time horizon from a maximum of Seven days (Trading) to a minimum of Seven years (Investing). Needless to say, it made a difference. A big one -- and a positive one at that, over the last 25 years.

Does that mean, no market participant can make money via Trading? Of course not. Some surely can. The problem though is that Trading is a Zero sum game and more often than not, the only consistent winner when Traders participate aggressively is the Stockbroker.

I remember one of the first stockbrokers I got to know, offering rookie traders a standing commitment of a counter order with a weekly off-market all cash settlement. I saw many a rookie trader turning wiser over time, albeit poorer.

Almost nine times out of ten, the broker smiled and collected without even bothering to have looked at what stock the rookie trader had bought or sold and he had countered.

Like I mentioned, Traders can make money and I could be wrong, but as far as I am concerned, I found the Route to Wealth Creation via Investing.

IOB Q4 net profit up 18% to ₹650 crore

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

INDIAN Overseas Bank (IOB) posted an 18% increase in net profit in the January-March 2023 quarter as consolidated profits rose to ₹650 crore during the quarter from ₹551 crore in the same quarter previous year. In the December 2022 quarter, the bank posted ₹555 crore profit.

Total income for quarter ended 31 March 2023 stood at ₹6,622 crore as against ₹6,006 crore in the quarter-ended 31 December 2022. In the March quarter previous year, the Chennai-headquartered bank had made ₹5,721 crore in total earnings.

In FY23, the bank showed a 23% increase in net profit to ₹ 2,099 crore against ₹ 1,710 crore. Total income of the bank increased by 8.7% to ₹23,509 crore during the financial year.

Interest income stood at ₹ 5,192 crore for the March 2023 quarter against ₹5,055 crore for quarter-ended 31 December 2022. Non-interest income stood at ₹1,430 crore for quarter-ended 31 March 2023 as against ₹ 950 crore for quarter-ended 31 December 2022.

Net interest margin of the bank showed a 52 basis points increase at 2.93% as on 31 March 2023 against 2.41% as on 31 March 2022. Gross NPA of the bank improved by 75 bps quarter-on-quarter to 7.44% as against 8.19% in the December quarter. Gross NPA has reduced both in quantum and as a percentage of Gross Advances (Q-o-Q). Net NPA reduced to ₹3,266 crore, or 1.83% in the fourth quarter, down from 2.43% in the December 2022 quarter.

Govt to infuse ₹300 cr equity in Alliance Air

PTI @ New Delhi

The government is set to make an equity infusion of ₹300 crore in regional carrier Alliance Air, which is facing financial headwinds, according to a senior official. Alliance Air, earlier part of Air India, is now owned by AI Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL), a special-purpose vehicle formed by the central government.

Alliance Air operates around 130 flights daily. In recent months, there have been instances of strikes by pilots to protest against non-restoration of salaries to the pre-Covid level and non-payment of allowance, among other issues. The finance ministry has approved an equity infusion of ₹300 crore into Alliance Air, the senior civil aviation ministry official said. Flights under 'Alliance Air' brand are operated by Airline Allied Services, which changed its name to Alliance Air Aviation Ltd.

RBI unlikely to hike interest rates this year

SACHIN KUMAR @ Mumbai

COOLING inflation and a decline in industrial output have further strengthened expectations of another pause in the repo rate hike by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) at its next meeting next month.

Experts believe that the easing of prices marks the end of the central bank's rate tightening cycle, with no more rate hikes expected this year.

Helped by decline in food prices, the retail inflation fell to an 18-month low of 4.7% in April, showed the data released on Friday. Also, industrial production growth slipped to a five-month low of 1.1% in March from 5.8% in February 2023.

It was the second month in a row that Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation remained within the RBI's comfort zone of below 6%. The retail inflation based on CPI was 5.66% in March 2023 and 7.79% in the year-ago period.

"Both CPI and IIP numbers have validated the MPCs (Monetary Policy Committee) decision to hold the repo rate at 6.5%. We expect a pause in the next meeting of the RBI next month," Soumyajit Niyogi, Director - Core Analytical Group, India Ratings & Research told TNIE.

"We expect the average CPI inflation to be 5.4% in the current financial year. Inflation is expected to be driven by two factors, first global commodity prices, especially oil and second is the El Nino effect. Until and unless we get more clarity about these two crucial factors, RBI is unlikely to make any call about a rate cut in the first half of this fiscal" he added.

"We expect to get a clearer picture of inflation and growth in the second half of this fiscal. So, any decision about the rate cut is expected to be taken only in the fourth quarter of the current fiscal," Niyogi added. After raising the repo rate by 250 basis points in six back-to-back hikes since May 2022, the central bank decided to leave the repo rate unchanged at 6.5% in its meeting last month. The pause in the rate hike surprised the market as experts were expecting a 25 basis points hike in the meeting.

"We expect CPI inflation to remain below 5% in the next two months and for the full fiscal year, we expect average CPI inflation at 5.1%. Weather-related disruptions could be the main threat to food inflation and overall CPI inflation in FY24. We maintain our view of the RBI maintaining an extended pause in 2023," said Rajani Sinha, Chief Economist at Care Edge.

Experts expect the inflation to ease in the coming months but there are still some concerns. They are wary of upside risks emerging from weather-led disruptions if El Nino conditions turn out to be more severe than currently anticipated. Possible heatwaves in the summer could also pose a concern.

Hopes rise on easing prices

4.7% CPI inflation falls to 18-month low in April

5.66% CPI inflation in March

5.2% RBI's projection for CPI inflation in Q4 of 2023-24

2%-6% RBI's comfort zone for inflation

Zimbabwe great Streak battling cancer

Former Zimbabwe all-rounder Heath Streak has been diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing treatment in South Africa. "Heath has cancer and is undergoing treatment under one of the most respected oncologists in South Africa," his family said. "Heath remains in good spirits and will continue to fight this disease in a similar vein with which he faced his opponents during his playing days on the cricket field."

All eyes on Samson

After an impressive opening phase of the season for the Royals captain, the wheels have come off with Royals now needing a helping hand from a couple of teams to even make the playoffs

GOMESH S @ Chennai

Sanju Samson of Rajasthan Royals in action against Royal Challengers Bangalore held at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Jaipur on Sunday | SPORTZPICS

YOU are an Indian wicket-keeper middle-order batter in this year's Indian Premier League (IPL). You are among the few in the national team reckoning, trying to kick open the doors. The first-choice wicketkeeper-batter across all formats is out of action, the second one gets injured during the season. If there ever was a chance to be grabbed, piling up match-winning performances on a consistent basis to move up the ladder, this was it.

While it is hard to say whether Rajasthan Royals skipper Sanju Samson thought or not, he surely hasn't made the most of it. As RR faced a massive 112-run defeat against Royal Challengers Bangalore in Jaipur on Sunday, the possibility of them making it to the top four will now depend on the results of other teams. Two weeks ago, they had five wins in seven games and were in the top half of the table. Since then, they have won only one match in six games, and are placed sixth.

"That is a good question, I don't know," said Samson with a wry smile on Sunday when he was asked where it all went wrong for the team. "I was thinking about it while I was sitting in the dugout, and seeing our batting collapse and I was like where did we go wrong? I do not have an answer to that to be very honest. I'm just thinking through it," he added. In fact, it has been the story of the second half of the season for RR. So much that Samson himself, despite being candid and pragmatic in his post-match chats, has repeated the phrase 'that is a good question, I don't know'.

On a personal level, Samson has so far scored 360 runs in 13 games at 32.72 while striking at 154.5. From an overall perspective, it is not bad. He has played some exhilarating innings as he always does. The only Indian wicket-keeper with more runs is Ishan Kishan (366) and his strike rate is 143.52. While it is still an above-average season as a batter, the numbers Samson has produced are neither tournament-winning nor is it the kind of show that makes you look up and take notice as he does with some of his shots at times. What's more, he has gotten out for less than 20 runs at least five times this season, which has had a direct impact on the results.

Samson, and RR, are understandably one of the few teams that have persisted with an ultra-aggressive approach no matter the condition or consequence of the match. The intent is in the right place, but it has not been translated into results as Samson has admitted on several occasions. Even after the loss against Sunrisers Hyderabad where they made 214/2, he said, "...with the target we posted we can only be happy after we win the game," indicating that they probably should have scored more. Jos Buttler has had a season to forget and with the kind of quality bowling attack they have, some of the on-field decisions, too, have been debatable as well.

The 2022 finalists could still get into the playoffs. They still have a positive Net Run Rate, and have a match to win on May 20. As Samson said, funnier things have happened in the IPL before. That being said, this was supposed to be the season where Samson held the limelight and took centre stage as a batter and captain. Unfortunately, he hasn't.

18,8,95,0,0
Buttler's last five scores

1 No of wickets ***Ashwin*** has picked up in his last four games

2, 9, DNB, DNB, 1 After some eye-catching performances, Dhruv Jurel's form has suffered in the last five games.

GONE IN 10 OVERS

Rajasthan took a big hit to their playoff hopes as they were bowled out in just 63 legitimate deliveries. A look...

TWO DUCKS INSIDE 1.2 OVERS The consistently aggressive Yashasvi Jaiswal departed off his second ball. He tried to clear mid off but hit it straight to Virat Kohli. Six balls later, Jos Buttler's recent run of low scores continued, as he also left without scoring, off Wayne Parnell.

PARNELL, BRACEWELL PICK UP MORE POWERPLAY WICKETS

On a two-paced surface, run-scoring was always going to be difficult. And so it showed. Sanju Samson's hoick across the line was a skier while Devdutt Padikkal's lofted flick didn't get the elevation. After Joe Root departed, they had lost half their side for 28.

HETMYER LONE RESISTANCE

In the face of some poor batting, Shimron Hetmyer's clean ball striking provided some respite as he hit three back-to-back sixes off Karn Sharma. However, it was all over too soon as they folded for 59.

ROYALS' RECENT FUNK

The loss — fourth in the last five games — means they are in sixth. With just one game remaining and an NRR of 0.14, they need to rely on multiple results to go their way to make their way to the qualifiers.

Brief scores: RCB 171/5 in 20 ovs (Du Plessis 55, Maxwell 54) bt RR 59 in 10.3 ovs (Hetmyer 35; Parnell 3/10).

CSK skipper MS Dhoni (centre), whose future is uncertain with the four-time IPL champs, doing a lap of honour as this was his side's final home game of the season. If CSK qualify for qualifiers, Dhoni & Co could be back in Chennai again this season | ASHWIN PRASATH

Spinners, batters' collective effort keep Kolkata in hunt

ASHOK VENUGOPAL @ Chennai

KOLKATA Knight Riders spinners Varun Chakravarthy (2/36) and Sunil Narine (2/15) stole the limelight at the MA Chidambaram stadium as the spin duo, assisted by Suyash Sharma, helped the visiting team restrict Chennai Super Kings to 144/6 in 20 overs on Sunday.

Later, captain Nitish Rana (57 n.o) and in-form Rinku Singh (54) navigated a tricky situation to help the visitors get past the target with six wickets and nine balls to spare. KKR were reeling at 33/3 before the left-handed duo put on a partnership of 99 runs. This win helped KKR to stay in play-off hunt.

Earlier in the first innings, CSK openers Ruturaj Gaikwad and Devon Conway started with a bang playing medium-pacers Vaibhav Arora and Harshit Rana with ease. However, once the spinners came on, things went sideways with Gaikwad getting out trying to take on Varun. Ajinkya Rahane and Conway tried to stabilise the innings, but the local boy was in the thick of the action as he got rid of Rahane in the eighth over.

Soon, Narine took charge, dictating the pace of play on a surface that was assisting the spinners. First, he cleaned up Ambati Rayudu with a peach of a delivery, and five balls later, Narine castled Moeen Ali which was perhaps the ball of the match. It was vintage Narine in action as Moeen failed to read a brilliant carrom ball. All of a sudden, CSK were in a spot of bother, reduced to 72/5 in 11 overs. Once Ravindra Jadeja joined Shivam Dube in the middle, the left-handed duo tried to take the game deep. Dube was clearly the one in charge as the franchise's designated spin-hitter ensured that the runs came in singles and doubles. Jadeja, at the other end, struggled to middle the ball.

Jadeja eventually got out in the final over for a below-par innings of 20 runs off 24 balls to a massive cheer from the crowd who had been chanting 'We want Dhoni' for a while. MS Dhoni got to bat only three balls and was even bowled off a free hit because of Arora's no ball, but he could not clear the ropes. Dube was the top-scorer as he made an unbeaten 34-ball 48 before being substituted by Matheesha Pathirana.

Brief scores: CSK 144/6 in 20 ovs (Dube 48 n.o; Narine 2/15, Varun 2/36) **lost to** KKR 147/4 in 18.3 ovs (Rana 57 n.o, Rinku 54; Deepak 3/27).

WILL SUN RISE IN GUJARAT?

Sunrisers Hyderabad will face Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad on Monday. A look...

SAHA, OUT OF SYLLABUS

Every team that has faced Titans have come up with plans for Shubman Gill at the top of the order. However, ***Wriddhiman Saha*** has been the out-of-syllabus question for which most teams have not had answers this season. His quick bursts early on have taken the pressure off Gill at the other end.

EYES ON AIDEN, THE CAPTAIN

Aiden Markram led Sunrisers Eastern Cape to title in the SA20 league, but in this year's IPL, his tactics with Hyderabad have been questionable to say the least. During the previous game against Lucknow, one bad bowling option turned the entire chase around with Abhishek going for five sixes in the over. How long before SRH look for other options?

NOOR VS ABHISHEK

Abhishek Sharma is possibly the better player of spin in the current SRH batting line-up and he will be up against Noor Ahmed, who has been the find of the season. The battle between the two youngsters could be an intriguing one.

Gujarat Titans vs Sunrisers Hyderabad, 7.30 PM, Ahmedabad — **Live on Star Sports and Jio Cinema**

Sindhu & Co show fight in losing cause

ENS/AGENCIES

THERE'S something about PV Sindhu and crunch games. Recent performances tend to go out of the equation when Sindhu takes the court for big games. The fighting spirit and her ability to use her height and strength to manipulate the shuttle was visible on Sunday. But that was not enough.

With India trailing 0-2 against Chinese Taipei in the Sudirman Cup (World Team Championships), which kicked off on Sunday, it was Sindhu's turn to enter the court for women's singles tie. She was up against Tai Tzu Ying, a shuttler who had seven consecutive wins over the Indian coming into the contest.

In that backdrop, Sindhu showed lot of courage but lost the tie 21-14, 18-21, 21-17.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty lost 13-21, 21-17, 18-21 to Lee Yang and Ye Hong Wei in the men's doubles match.

Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand beat Lee Chia Hsin and Teng Chun Hsun 21-15, 18-21, 13-21. Earlier, the mixed pair of Tanisha Crasto and K Sai Prateek and men's singles specialist, HS Prannoy, had lost their respective ties as India lost 1-4.

'IOA taking charge of WFI first step in our fight'

AGENCIES @ New Delhi

THE protesting wrestlers on Sunday termed the Indian Olympic Association's (IOA) decision to take charge of all the activities of the Wrestling Federation of India as the "first step" in their fight against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the former WFI chief.

The country's top wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and Vinesh Phogat, have been protesting at the Jantar Mantar for the last 22 days demanding the arrest of Brij Bhushan for alleged sexual harassment of women wrestlers. The IOA, through its letter on May 12, asked the secretary general of WFI to hand over the official documents including financial instruments to its ad-hoc panel, making it clear the outgoing office bearers shall have no role in the running of the federation.

The WFI said it has no issues in obeying the IOA order since they were already co-operating with the authorities. "This (the dissolution of the current WFI) is the first step in our fight for justice. Our fight has begun in right earnest, it's a victory for us... and we will continue or fight until we get justice," said Bajrang, the Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist. Asian Games gold medallist Vinesh Phogat rued that not a single ruling party's woman parliamentarian had met the wrestlers "to extend support in our fight for the dignity of women". She said that from Monday onwards the wrestlers will give letters by hand or via e-mail to all women parliamentarians of the ruling party to come and support them.

"When they talk about the safety of women in the country, then we too are their daughters and they should come out and support us," she said.

Meanwhile, the IOA's three-member ad-hoc committee has made it clear that the process to elect new WFI office bearers will be completed within the 45-day time frame and that the charge will be handed back to the elected body.

Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia & Sakshi Malik address the media | PARVEEN NEGI

EXPRESS READ

No medals for India on final day of World Cup

BAKU: India failed to win a medal on the final day of the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol with both the men's rapid-fire pistol and women's rifle 3-positions shooters coming up short on Sunday. India finished their campaign with four medals, including one gold, two silver and a bronze. While Manini Kaushik finished six in the rifle 3 positions, both Vijayveer Sidhu and Anish Bhanwala (rapid-fire) failed to advance to the final.

Australia to host WI and Pak this summer

SYDNEY: The Australian men's cricket team's home Tests in the coming summer will be crammed into an unusually narrow window in December and January. Australia will meet Pakistan in three Tests and the West Indies in two in the traditional school holiday period. The Pakistan series will begin with a Test in Perth from December 14 to 18 followed by the Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground from December 26 to 30.

Pakistan to play SAFF in B'luru next month

NEW DELHI: Pakistan has confirmed its participation in the South Asian Football Federation Championships in Bengaluru in June-July and the AIFF does not see any problem with the players of the neighbouring country travelling to India. "We don't see any problem in the coming of players from Pakistan to India...," AIFF secretary general Shaji Prabhakaran said.

FOOTBALL

Man City edge closer to title as challengers Arsenal slump to big defeat

AFP @ Liverpool

MANCHESTER City are on the brink of winning the Premier League title after Arsenal crashed to a shock 3-0 defeat against Brighton on Sunday. Mikel Arteta's side were rocked by second half goals from Julio Enciso, Deniz Undav and Pervis Estupinan at the Emirates Stadium.

Second placed Arsenal trail City by four points and a defeat for the Gunners at Nottingham Forest on Saturday would hand Pep Guardiola's men their fifth title in six years. Fired by Ilkay Gundogan's brace and Erling Haaland's latest goal, City's 3-0 win at Everton earlier on Sunday had moved them within touching distance of the title and Arsenal's loss makes the silverware almost certain to remain in Manchester. Even if Arsenal beat Forest, City will be champions for a third successive season if they defeat Chelsea at the Etihad Stadium in their next game on May 21.

City have three games to play, with the Chelsea clash followed by trips to Brighton and Brentford, while Arsenal have just a home match against Wolves after their trip to Forest.

While battle-tested City are powering towards the finish line, Arsenal's young team have choked away their bid to win a first title since 2004.

Arsenal's recent four-game winless run, including a 4-1 thrashing at City, allowed their rivals to seize top spot, an opportunity they have exploited in ruthless fashion.

Although Arsenal's unexpected title challenge seems destined to fall short, it has still been a hugely encouraging season for the north Londoners after over a decade of underachievement.

There is no shame in coming second to a team of treble-chasing City's class, although Arteta will be frustrated they failed to last the pace after leading the table for long periods.

Thrashed 5-1 at home by struggling Everton on Monday, Roberto De Zerbi's Brighton bounced back with a dynamic display that prayed on the anxiety coursing through Arsenal's players and fans.

Manchester City's Ilkay Gundogan (R) celebrates scoring his team's third goal during the Premier League match against Everton at Goodison Park on Sunday | AFP

Elche surprise Atletico

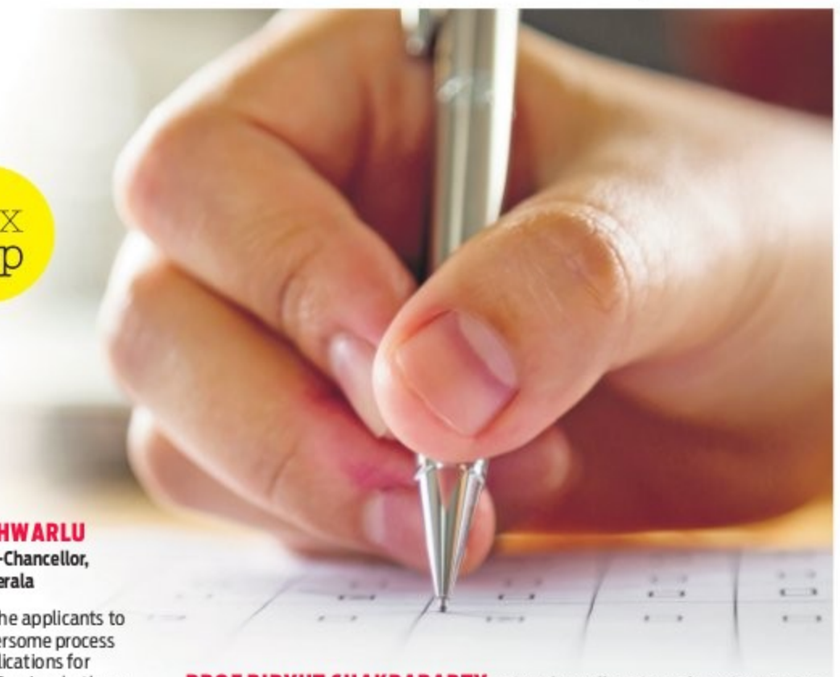
BARCELONA: Atletico Madrid fell to a surprise 1-0 defeat at relegated Elche on Sunday, confirming that Diego Simeone's side are no longer mathematically in contention to win La Liga. Leaders Barcelona had the chance to win the title later on Sunday with a win at city rivals Espanyol.

AGNIVEER AIR FORCE EXAM Date: May 20 | CUET UG Date: May 21 | JEE ADVANCED Date: June 4

With the standardisation in the pattern of undergraduate and postgraduate admissions across universities in India, you will need to clear the Common University Entrance Test, which is in its second year. Vice-chancellors of central universities share their perspectives regarding the new testing pattern and why it is a great tool to assess student's ability

CUET: USHERING IN A NEW CHANGE

VOX pop



THE Common University Entrance Test (CUET) is entering its second year. When it was launched last year, it had ushered in a sense of excitement with a tinge of apprehension among many. But the apprehensions this year have been put to rest as the Chairman of the University Grants Commission, Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar, outlined how this time around, there are three shifts in a day, test centres have been recognised in advance and arrangements for extra capacity at centres have been made to brace for any technical glitches and more.

The National Testing Agency (NTA) already conducts two major exams in the country, the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) and the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) and it undertook CUET too, confident that this time the experience will be smoother for students. Edex spoke to the vice-chancellors of several central universities of the country to know how their institutions are witnessing the shift in the milieu to work in tandem with implementation of the new exam, paving way for students of a generation that is much brighter and more sensible.

PROF RAMA SHANKER DUBEY, Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Gujarat

CUET has strived to maintain a national character as students from far-flung parts of the country can now see themselves studying at a prestigious university. This actually gives a chance to not only the meritorious students but also to the students who aspire to be at a better university even when they hail from small villages. The exam lifts the added economic burden on parents of having to travel to different cities for entrance exams. It has also led to a diversified crowd in our institution as now there is an opportunity for students to culturally integrate themselves. We are advertising on social media so that we can attract more students from all over the country

PROFESSOR SUNAINA SINGH, Vice-Chancellor, Nalanda University

It is quite a great endeavour undertaken by the National Testing Agency (NTA). It brings forth a common landscape where different institutions and students from across the country are brought together. It opens multiple doors for them bringing in more choices and options and of course, the feasibility of it is praiseworthy. It addresses the students on a PAN India level, even a student from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Asian and international countries can avail the education system without any hindrance. My best wishes to the participating universities and colleges and to the students appearing for CUET 2023 exam

PROF BASAVARAJ P DONUR, Registrar, Central University of Karnataka

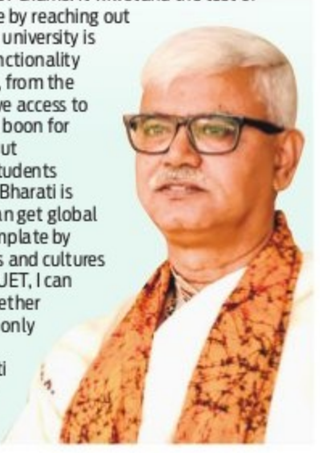
From 2011-16, the Central University of Karnataka conducted an entrance exam on its own in 32 centres across the country. But it was not in a position to have an exam centre in every state. Moreover, CUK entrance exam dates would clash with that of Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and so on which resulted in overlap of examinations. With CUET, we are attracting students from all states of India. Also, the exam has increased diversity on campus. Prepping for the second edition, we have issued admission notifications, conducted press meets and our faculty has toured nearby places to popularise our courses

PROF VENKATESHWARLU HARIPURAM, Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Kerala

CUET has enabled the applicants to sideline the cumbersome process of filling different applications for different universities. Previously, there was less awareness among students about colleges and courses that they can avail but now, opportunities are made available to everyone. We are receiving applications from rural areas now. Earlier, central universities were conducting a common entrance examination but CUET has now included other universities in the pool, giving the universities better visibility. We have been evaluating our software systems and the tasks have already been delegated to the admissions committee ahead of CUET

PROF BIDYUT CHAKRABARTY, Vice-Chancellor, Visva-Bharati University

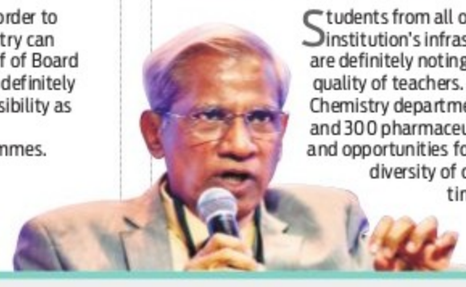
I fully endorse the commencement of CUET exams. It will stand the test of time and would help in erasing the divide by reaching out to students outside of the state where the university is located. I welcome the initiative and its functionality because it gives a chance to every student, from the hinterland to the metropolitan, to now have access to education at these universities. Also, it is a boon for the universities situated at the periphery but academically well-equipped to welcome students nationally and even internationally. Visva-Bharati is finally standing up to its name as now it can get global exposure. The common exam creates a template by bringing students from varied backgrounds and cultures and catering to their academic interests. CUET, I can say, is a welcome move where it brings together the idea of oneness and one India and it is only possible when the sociological divide is erased. CUET will also enable Visva-Bharati to get a brand name that we did not have before, a brand beyond West Bengal



AMAN MITTAL, Vice-President, Lovely Professional University

CUET has definitely been a welcome move, it is an umbrella test designed for the students in order to ease their application process for the universities. Now, students from all corners of the country can avail admission to universities that are not geographically close. The limelight has been taken off of Board exams and now students can practically take up their choice of subject and can do better in it. It definitely provides a sense of standardisation to the whole process and gives our university some visibility as a brand. It is probably too early for me to say how beneficial would CUET be as we are participating for the first time but 4 lakh students have already applied to the programmes. Students can apply through CUET or via LPU National Entrance and Scholarship Test (LPUNEST), designed by our team for admission. If they want to avail scholarships, they need to appear for the university's entrance test. Let us see how this year advances and then we shall strategise further to improve the scene of academia

PROF TEJASVI VENKAPPA KATTIMANI, Vice-Chancellor, Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh

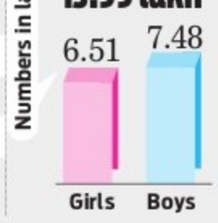


Students from all over India can now visit our university, inquire about the profiles of our faculty, the institution's infrastructure, research programmes and so on. Our university is a beneficiary of CUET and we are definitely noting that even students from other states are opting to study and that is because of the quality of teachers. One such is a student from Lucknow who joined our university as he noted that our Chemistry department is specialised. Our flagship department is Chemistry plus, more than 200 chemical and 300 pharmaceutical industries are located in the vicinity of our campus. CUET has opened many choices and opportunities for students. The intracultural aspect here is going to help students in understanding the diversity of our Indian culture. NEP talks about skills and our university has implemented it. This time, we are expecting that more than 50% of admission to our MSc programme will be from outside Andhra Pradesh. All our 20 teachers are utilising social media to promote our courses. We post videos to reach out to students and increase intake via CUET

And the top four are...

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR

- Delhi University
- Banaras Hindu University
- Allahabad University
- Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University



REGISTRATIONS IN SPECIFIC CATEGORIES

Registrations based on LOCATION

NUMBER OF INT'L COUNTRIES	2022	2023
	59	74

NUMBER OF STUDENTS FROM JAMMU & KASHMIR	2022	2023	INCREASE
	13,021	82,655	6.3 times

NUMBER OF STUDENTS FROM NE STATES	2022	2023	UP BY
	59,208	77,365	31%

Entrance exams — stressful or helpful?

Are entrance exams stress-inducing or do they offer a level playing field for all those students who opt for it? Edex speaks to experts to understand the nature and necessity of these examinations

THE second edition of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET 2023) is just around the corner, with the exam scheduled from May 21 to 31. However, the first edition of the exam was marred with technical glitches—the National Testing Agency received over 65,000 complaints, according to the Ministry of Education.

Aspirants have raised similar complaints against several other entrance examinations as well. All this hullabaloo around entrance exams begs the question—how prevalent are these issues? How relevant are these concerns? Are entrance exams the exclusionary hassle that critics make them out to be? Or are they integral to our education system?

HERE IS WHAT EXPERTS HAVE TO SAY:

MCQs vs Subjective

Most entrance exams are in the format of multiple-choice questions (MCQs), but is this the right way to go about conducting them? It is a misconception that MCQs test only the candidate's memory and not the subject understanding, says Math Coach MN Rao. He argues, "Even to remember answers accurately, candidates must have subject knowledge." Further, guesswork would give candidates less than 1/4th accuracy in the exam, he reveals.

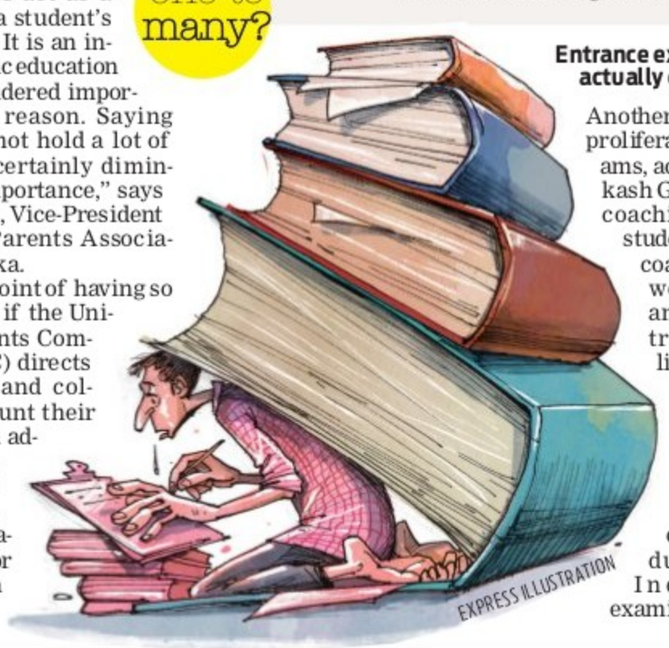
In fact, MCQs are the most efficient pattern for an entrance exam, says the coach. It is because MCQs have singular, objective answers which reduces the scope for multiple interpretations. "For subjective questions, the answer given by the student may not always match with the answers in the key, which could lead to loss of marks." He explains that this is the reason subjective exams have re-evaluation.

Board Exams?

one to many?

"Board exams act as a milestone in a student's academic life. It is an indicator of basic education and it is considered important for that reason. Saying that they do not hold a lot of significance certainly diminishes their importance," says Sijo Sebastian, Vice-President of Voice of Parents Association, Karnataka.

"What is the point of having so many boards, if the Universities Grants Commission (UGC) directs universities and colleges to discount their importance in admission criteria in favour of CUET ranking?" fumes career counsellor Jayaprakash Gandhi.



Multiple entrance exams

JEE, NEET, CUET and more, students have no respite as they are required to write multiple exams. The reason for writing multiple exams may vary, from trying one's best to become successful in the absence of a single exam. Most of them find no alternative given they are conscious of the reality. "Everyone is now working hard to secure admission to well-known institutes," says Akshara KP, a student who was preparing for NEET and KEAM (Kerala Engineering Architecture Medical). Whereas, stress and grit are obvious, the corollary of the situation is bright. Writing multiple exams helps students get a well-defined picture of their future

Centralisation of exams

M Jagadesh Kumar, has noted that the NEP 2020 advocates reducing the burden of admission tests on students. Speaking on the merging of JEE, NEET and CUET, he says, "Major entrance test mergers must be performed at some time.... Such a merger is of course challenging and needs to be done meticulously." The general secretary of the State Platform for Common School System – Tamil Nadu (SPCSS-TN), Prince Gajendra Babu, believes that the centralisation of exams is against the federal nature of the Indian state and against the constitutional rights of states

Entrance exams or are they actually entry barriers?

Another issue with the over-proliferation of entrance exams, according to Jayaprakash Gandhi, is the rise of coaching culture. "Only students who can afford coaching are able to do well in entrance exams. For the rest, entrance exams seem like a distant dream," he says.

Jayaprakash Gandhi believes that for entrance exams to be truly inclusive, the government must introduce a common, all-India entrance examination for non-technical central universities, similar to the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in countries like the USA. However, he says that states must have the option to opt out of this exam and that state universities must have the freedom to have their own admission criteria.

Does this encourage coaching culture further?

A new competitive entrance exam brings with it another spectre of a pervasive coaching culture. The worrying trend of aspirants enrolling in coaching classes instead of focusing on their classwork has raised red flags among experts. Additionally, the exorbitant fees charged by these institutes have raised an alarm about the exclusivity of higher education, as only those who can afford it have access to this support.

According to Dr Om Prakash, Professor of Psychiatry and Deputy Medical Superintendent at the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences in Delhi, this is a worrisome trend that inflicts trauma on students by creating a pressure-cooker-like environment. "We are subjecting students to stress and anxiety in the pursuit of mere positions," he warns. The intense focus on coaching has led to the creation of "dummy schools" by coaching institutes. This, as Dr Om Prakash points out, is a reflection of a flawed education system, where the importance of actual school education is being undermined.

Prince Gajendra Babu echoes this sentiment, emphasising that coaching culture adds no valuable knowledge to students. Instead, it teaches them how to tackle MCQs.

What after the exam? This process awaits...

Examination is only the first step, the process is a little longer. Here are the steps that follow:

Students may find themselves overwhelmed by the intricate admission and counselling process that follows the scorecards. Uncertainty about where to apply, how to apply or how the counselling process will proceed is common among applicants. To ease those worries, we have curated an all-encompassing guide for navigating the CUET UG 2023 admission and counselling process. It should be noted though that university admission and counselling procedures can vary between institutions, thus candidates are advised to visit the official website of each university for comprehensive information. Nevertheless, here is a general and step-by-step guide for the CUET admission and counselling procedure:

next steps

- After receiving the CUET scorecard, visit official websites of the universities for registration date
- Register for the CUET UG counselling session for various universities based on the CUET results
- Review the eligibility guidelines of the desired course in each university/college applied to
- Select courses in which you are interested and enter your CUET score. Then, choose the preferences of colleges in different universities
- Choose a programme and college combination and fill in the preference
- College combination will determine the order of preference for the allotment of seats
- Participating universities will release their merit lists based on the CUET scores and other eligibility criteria

- Shortlisted candidates will be called for counselling sessions
- After seat allotment, candidates will be given a specified date to accept the seat
- If declined, candidates would no longer be able to participate in the subsequent rounds of counselling
- To freeze a seat, pay the admission fees to secure provisional admission to the selected college
- Colleges will accept or reject the provisionally allotted seat to the candidates upon verification.
- Seat upgrades are available to candidates, and their consideration in the next allotment rounds will depend on seat availability.
- If vacant seats are announced by the university, candidates who have not been allotted a seat in previous rounds of counselling may apply for spot admission.

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15.05.2023
MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

Youngest sailor

On this day in 2010, Jessica Watson became the youngest person to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around the world

EARLY LIFE

Jessica Watson was born on Queensland's Gold Coast on 18 May 1993. Her mother described her as a quiet, shy child who didn't like adventures

HER BOAT

Watson was deeply involved in the preparation of the boat, Ella's Pink Lady. Most of the time the boat is steered by a self-steering windvane system

MOVIE

The movie, *True Spirit*, about her circumnavigation, starring Teagan Croft as Watson was produced by Netflix and released on February 3, 2023

Lost & Found: The Chola Treasure Trail

PG 3

KATANA, KIMONO, & ALL-THINGS KAWAII

After two years of being an online event, the city witnessed Japan Habba 2023, supported by the Consulate-General of Japan in Bengaluru, among others, in a live format. The 15th edition of this cultural fest, held at the Indian Institute of Science, displayed Japanese culture through music, cosplaying and food. A highlight of this year's habba was a Japanese musical group performing the Oscar-winning song *Nattu Nattu*.

PICS: SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

City-based actor Gulshan Devaiah, who has turned cop for his latest series, *Dahaad*, which is out now, speaks to *CE* about breathing life into the character of the action thriller

CUTTING TO THE CHASE

A still from *Dahaad*

MONIKA MONALISA

IT'S widely believed that Gulshan Devaiah is known to pick his roles wisely. And fans are hoping he has done that again with his latest, *Dahaad*. In the series on Amazon Prime Video, he plays the role of Devilal Singh, a senior officer to Anjali Bhaati – played by Sonakshi Sinha – who is trying to catch a serial killer, portrayed by Vijay Verma.

Unlike his previous role in Sikhasha Mandal, where he was a medical entrance exam coach, this time he was expected to portray a calm persona. "He's a good guy, married with two children. He always tries his best to do the right thing, be it a cop, a father or husband. He is supportive of Anjali and sees her as a capable police officer," says Devaiah.

One of the things that appealed to him about the character is his non-heroic straightforwardness. "Despite certain corrupted ways in the system, he always tries to do the right thing. He's a good guy with his flaws of course, but he tries his best to do good even if he's not successful at it many times," he explains.

In the series, Anand Swarnakar, played by Vijay Varmam, has an uncanny resemblance to Mohan Kumar Vivekanand, who has been popularised by the name Cyanide Mohan, for giving cyanide-coated pills to his victims. However, Devaiah says his character has been mostly created from the script. "Whatever I have done has come from my interpretation of the script, my imagination, notes from my directors and sometimes a little improvisation with my colleagues," says Devaiah, who hails from Bengaluru.

Having been shot during the beginning of the pandemic, the shoot came to a standstill during the lockdown. "We shot for about 35 days before the lockdown and the rest was done after the first wave. It wasn't so difficult for me because my part of post production was quite strong and I remembered most of it. I only had to make sure I didn't put on weight because I had to fit into my uniform," he adds.

The show is created by Reema Kagti and Zoya Akhtar. But since Kagti co-directed the show along with Ruchika Oberoi, Devaiah says, "I loved working with Reema and Ruchika, my two directors and I got along well with them outside of the shoot as well."

Now, Devaiah is looking forward to *8 A.M Metro*, where he will be seen opposite Sayami Kher. The shoot of his upcoming project *Ulajh*, a patriotic thriller, headlined by Janhvi Kapoor, will start by the end of May.

> *Whatever I have done has come from my interpretation of the script, my imagination, notes from my directors and sometimes a little improvisation with my colleagues*
>
> Gulshan Devaiah, actor

Aslam Gafoor (@aslamgafoor) is a hospitality professional with experience in business development, sales and marketing with well-known hotels, and food and beverage companies. A few of his passions are travel, food and wine, and he enjoys sharing these experiences as a columnist.

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'** The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in *CE* on Monday. The first prize winner this week will win a discount voucher worth ₹1,500 from Malgudi Mylari Mane**

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1) Patishapta 2) Kuzhambu 3) Tarte tatin

FIRST 3 TO GET IT RIGHT

1) Hitesh G 2) Varsha Ramesh 3) Ganapathy

Standup comedian Aakash Mehta, who is coming to the city, speaks about performing in Bengaluru, his special, and India becoming a global hub for comedy

LOTS OF LAUGHS

TUNIR BISWAS

AAKASH Mehta, one of the biggest names in the Indian standup circuit, is coming to Bengaluru with not just one, not two but six of his shows which will be spread over three days – May 19, 20 and 21. "All these shows were conceived at different points in time. One of them is a new show that I'm touring right now. But it's not all new stuff. I'm performing my show Nasty as well. This is a farewell tour for Nasty, as I've been performing it for over five years. It will soon come out on YouTube as a special in June. We didn't have any plans for performing Nasty, but so many people reached out to us wanting to see it live for the last time," says Mehta, who is finishing 12 years in comedy in 2023.

Earlier in March, Mehta released his first standup special 'No Smoking' for free on YouTube. "I released it for free because we're in the middle of a recession right now. I thought of putting it out for free in a 'pay-as-you-like' model. People are still tuning in to watch it and are leaving comments," shares Mehta. As of now, No Smoking has amassed around 8,00,000 views on YouTube.

Having been a comedian for over a decade, Mehta has watched his relationship with the Bengaluru crowd develop over the last 12 years. "The first time I ever went on tour properly was in 2015. Since then, Bengaluru has been an early adopter of my comedy. A lot of us performers call it the 'reward city'. You tour around the country and do shows in many cities, some of the shows turn out to be weird, and then you come to Bengaluru and it is where you get your remarks. The running joke between comedians is that no matter how much you sell elsewhere, you will always double it in Bengaluru," he shares.

Mehta has developed a reputation for being fiercely independent. He isn't signed to any agency, and everything is largely self-produced. He feels an independent career can be a double-edged sword. "There are two sides to it. The disadvantage is you will be kept out of the 'trending' conversation. Management agencies work in bulk and use the comedians signed under them to save time and effort. That cuts you off the ecosystem when, frankly, there aren't a lot of independent comedians in the scene. But the advantages are endless. You are free to do anything you want. There's no outside pressure of a deadline. You can work on multiple projects. I do standup, run podcasts and even did a music album last year. Instead of trying to fit yourself into an ecosystem, you get to build one from scratch. For me, the freedom to carve out one's path is key. I also run an event management agency Lasoon Live, and watching the comedians signed under us make it big is so wonderful to witness," he says.

With Scottish comedian Daniel Sloss recently coming to Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi as part of his tour, Mehta believes India will soon become a global hub for standup. "The pandemic has opened up India to a lot of stuff from the outside. It has also opened us up collectively to the idea of getting out of the house a lot more. The enthusiasm to check out a live event, or a small local band or even a play, has gone up because we appreciate getting out of the house so much more. But I feel Daniel and others are under-servicing the market because they're just going to do three cities right now. When in fact, they can do way bigger shows in much more volume than thought of before," points out Mehta.

CITY READ

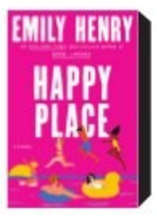
Jewellery brand celebrates Mother's Day

Jewellery brand, Raj Diamonds celebrated Mother's Day in unique style, where mothers of employees were invited for an event which included a foot-washing ceremony. Over 100 mothers participated in the event that also included a special puja, following which the mothers were given gift hampers. Eshwar Surana, managing director, Raj Diamonds said, "It is said that God can't be present everywhere and so he created mothers on earth. Mothers are like natural diamonds – beautiful, strong, precious, and filled with love that lasts forever."

Educators honoured with Leadership Award

Robert Christopher, chairman of Chris Canadian School Vineyard Academy and Joyce Ramola Christopher, director of Chris Canadian Global School, were awarded with the Global Education Leadership Achievement Award in recognition of their exceptional contributions to the field of education. The award was by Dame Nia Griffith, the Minister for International Trade of the United Kingdom, in a ceremony held at the British Parliament in Westminster, London. Amish Tripathy, minister (Education and Cultural) from the Indian High Commission in London, G Viswanathan, the founder and chancellor of Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) and other distinguished guests were in attendance.

BOOK NOOK

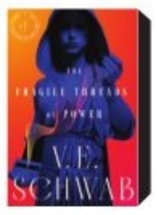


Happy Place
By Emily Henry

A couple who broke up months ago pretend to still be together for their annual weeklong vacation with their best friends in this glittering and wise new novel.

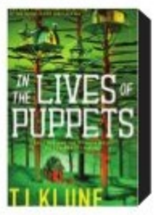
Chain of Thorns
By Cassandra Clare

Cordelia Carstairs has lost everything that matters to her. In only a few short weeks, she has seen her father murdered, her plans to become parabatai with her best friend, Lucie, destroyed, and her marriage to James Herondale crumble before her eyes. Even worse, she is now bound to an ancient demon, Lilith, stripping her of her power as a Shadowhunter.



The Fragile Threads of Power
By V.E. Schwab

Once, there were four worlds, nestled like pages in a book, each pulsing with fantastical power, and connected by a single city: London. Until the magic grew too fast, and forced the worlds to seal the doors between them in a desperate gamble to protect their own.



In the Lives of Puppets
T.J. Klune

A little home built into the branches of a grove of trees, live three robots--fatherly inventor android Giovanni Lawson, a pleasantly sadistic nurse machine, and a small vacuum desperate for love and attention. Victor Lawson, a human, lives there too.

WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE

Pottery workshop

A therapeutic and skill-building pottery class for everyone. Learn how to throw a pot on the potter's wheel and make beautiful clay creations.

When: May 16 onwards, 11am
Where: Lahe Lahe, Kodihalli
Details: bookmyshow.com

Standup Comedy

Take some time off for an absurd, edgy, and funny evening as some of the city's best comedians try to crack you up with their jokes.

When: May 15, 8pm
Where: Bistro Claytopia, Koramangala
Details: bookmyshow.com

Up in the hill

This arduous-yet-extremely rewarding hike of Uttari Betta is a 4-km trek across a spectacular lush green landscape which offers a quiet scenic view similar to that of the Western Ghats.

Where: Meetup at Gopalan Arcade, Mysuru Road
When: May 15, 10.59pm
Details: bookmyshow

Whodunit

Namma Nimmolagobba is about a family who has lived all their life on the banks of a river and at the bottom of a mountain, and now is under attack by a stranger.

Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar
When: May 16, 7.30pm
Details: bookmyshow.com

Fine Wine

Unwind with a glass or two at the tasting room overlooking the vineyards with panoramic views or stay back to enjoy the world of wines.

Where: Rico Park, Singanayakanahall
When: May 15
Details: bookmyshow.com

Connected with nature

Celebrate National Hug a Tree Day by hug our almond tree that was planted in 1944.

Where: Urban Solace Cafe, Halasuru
When: May 15
Details: 9845013055

BUDDING DANCER

A young Bharatanatyam dancer performs during a competition at Ravindra Kalakshetra | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

QUICK FIX

AMLA PICKLE

Contributed by **Radhika Madhavan,** Chennai

INGREDIENTS

- **Amla/Gooseberry:** 10 nos
- **Red chilli powder:** 3 tbsp
- **Turmeric powder:** 1 tsp
- **Fenugreek powder:** 1/4 tsp
- **Gingelly oil:** 5-6 tbsp
- **Asafoetida:** 1 tsp
- **Salt:** as per taste
- **Mustard seeds:** 1 tsp

METHOD

- In a pan, heat oil. Add mustard seeds and let them splutter. Add asafoetida.
- Wash and wipe the gooseberry. Add it to the oil.
- In 2-3 minutes, it's skin will start shriveling. At that time, add chilli powder, turmeric powder, and salt.
- Simmer the flame and keep mixing till the raw smell of chilli powder goes.
- Add fenugreek powder and cook for a minute. Switch off.

What's cooking in your kitchen?

We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com

FIT BIT

URDHVA MUKHA UPAVISTHA KONASANA PADANGUSTHASANA

The word Padangusthasana means holding the big toe. Here, the neck is stretched to face up while sitting nice and tall with the chest broad in Seated Straddle Pose Prep with the hands holding the big toes. It brings a nice stretch in the front of the neck.

STEPS

- Start in Dandasana (Staff Pose), taking a few deep breaths here. Inhale, take your legs stretching out till the widest V possible without overstretching the inner thighs or hamstrings. Exhale completely. While stretching out both legs, press through your big toe mounds and root down your femur (thigh bone), engaging the quadriceps.
- Inhale, take your hands behind with the fingers pointing back, and try to widen the legs without overstretching. Be seated, connecting your pelvis to the floor in Upavistha Konasana Variation Sitting Upright. Extend the feet out, pointing the knees and the toes up.
- Exhale, bring the torso to a forward bend from the hips by sliding your hands on the legs, catching big toes. Lift your head, taking your chin away from the chest. Sit nice and tall, extending the spine and pushing your navel into the spine. Consciously open the chest, keeping the shoulders broad.
- Stay here for about six breaths or as per, fixing your gaze at any point to the ceiling. To release, exhale, and take your head back to the center. Inhale, release your hands, legs, and back to Dandasana. Counter the stretch with Seated Wind Release Pose with your chin to the chest. Relax.

BENEFITS

- Stretches and strengthens hamstrings, calf, lower back, hip flexors, knees, ankle joints and pelvic muscles.
- Cultivates suppleness in the groin and inner thighs. Improves the flexibility of the legs and lower back.
- Helps prepare the body for advanced Upavistha Konasana Variations.
- Ensures the intercostal muscles are efficiently used to help the lungs.
- Brings a calming effect and relieves mental stress or tension.
- Promotes a smooth flow of prana (energy) throughout the body.
- Ensures the outward flow of negative energy (apana vayu).
- Works wonders to students with urinary disorders. Reduces menstrual pain and discomforts and symptoms of endometriosis.

LIMITATIONS

People with ankle, knee, hip joints injury, or lower back, spine, hamstrings, or legs, abdominal recent surgery, weak musculature or general body weakness, or brittle bones, or migraine, severe arthritis of hip or knee joints or lower back pain, sacroiliac joint pain should avoid this.

Initially, pregnant women should not follow deep hip openers.

By N Elumalai, PhD scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

NOW STREAMING

REGIONAL

GASLIGHT (Hindi)

Sara Ali Khan, who returns to her royal family estate after 15 years to visit her estranged father, only finds out that he is missing. There are only a handful of people who could answer as to who might be responsible for the disappearance of her father

Cast – Vikrant Massey, Sara Ali Khan, Akshay Oberoi, Chitrangada Singh

Watch on – Disney+ Hotstar

METER
(Telugu)

The story is about an energetic youngster, Arjun Kalyan (Kiran Abbavaram), who ends up becoming a SI. But he loathes the job and tries his best to get dismissed from the department.

Cast: Kiran Abbavaram, Athulya Ravi, Keshavdeepak Ballari, Krishna Murali Posani, Sapthagiri.

Watch on: Netflix

DASARA (kannada)

Amid the daily grind in a coal mining town, politics, and power dynamics take a dangerous toll on a love triangle between three long time friends.

Cast: Nani, Keerthy Suresh, Dheekshith Shetty, Shine Tom Chacko

Watch on: Netflix

ROMANCHAM (Malayalam)

A comedy horror movie says the story of a group of friends in 2007 Bangalore narrates a chain of horrifying events after using an Ouija board.

Cast: Soubin Shahir, Arjun Ashokan, Abin Bino, Siju Sunny, Sajin Gopu,

Watch on : Disney+ Hostar

KALI JOTTA (Punjabi)

The story portrays the struggle and relationship between Raabia and her student Anant and raises various questions and disagreements regarding the politics of gender performativity in the Indian cultural system.

Cast : Satinder Sartaaj, Ankur Verma · Sattu, Neeru Bajwa, Harpreet Bhoora, Wamiqa Gabb

Watch on : Chaupal OTT

All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.

VIDUTHALAI PART 1(tamil)

This is a story of an ordinary man who is put in an extraordinary situation. He would consider a certain path to be the right one but is unable to as those above him think otherwise.

Cast: Soori, Vijay Sethupathi, Bhavani Sre

Watch on: ZEE 5

AUGUST 16, 1947 (Tamil)

It revolves around a village where people suffer from a British officer during the pre-independence era. How he keeps the news of India becoming independent hidden from them for his selfish needs forms the rest of the story.

Cast : Gautham Karthik, Madhusudhan Rao, Neelima Rani, Jason Shah, Richard Ashton, Suresh Ekambaram

Watch on: Amazon Prime

FOREIGN

ABBOTT ELEMENTARY (New Season/English)

Follows a group of teachers brought together in one of the worst public schools in the country, simply because they love teaching.

Cast: Quinta Brunson, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Janelle James

Watch on: Disney+ Hotstar

A MAN CALLED OTTO
(Movie/English)

Devastated and lonely, a widower decides to take a drastic step. However, his plans are disrupted by a lively family that moves in next door.

Cast: Tom Hanks, Mariana Treviño, Rachel Keller

Watch on: Netflix

HANNAH GADSBY: SOMETHING SPECIAL (Stand-up comedy special)

The comic shares tales of love and marriage about a panicky proposal, a novelty wedding cake and a fateful bunny encounter.

Cast: Hannah Gadsby

Watch on: Netflix

THE MARVELOUS MRS MAISEL
(New Season/English)

After her husband leaves her, young mother of two Miriam "Midge" Maisel discovers that she has a talent for stand-up comedy. Could this be her calling?

Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

SUBSCRIPTION

ZEE5:	₹ 799 per year
Prime Video:	₹ 179 per month
Disney+Hotstar:	₹ 199 for 3 months
Netflix:	₹ 149 per month
Sony LIV:	₹ 299 per month
Mubi:	₹ 1,999 per year

LOST & FOUND: THE CHOLA TREASURE TRAIL

With the renewed interest in Chola history post the release of Mani Ratnam's *PS 2*, **Jitha Karthikeyan** unearths the mysteries of sculptures smuggled & reclaimed

INTEREST in all things Chola has witnessed a sudden spike with the release of the latest blockbuster, *Ponniyin Selvan*. The grand sets of *PS 2* and the brilliance of Kalki's original novel have brought the spotlight back on this ancient era in public minds. There certainly could not be a more perfect time than this to also discover the magnificence of Chola art.

The Cholas were known for their temple architecture. The Brihadeshwara temple in Thanjavur is an architectural marvel indeed. And so are various others built by them in Gangaikonda Cholapuram and the Airavatesvara temple in Darasuram. Apart from the splendour of their architecture, the Cholas were known for their sculptures, es- pecially in bronze. Breathtaking with their fine workmanship, the beauty of the Chola sculptures was unsurpassed. It is this very attribute that made them susceptible to theft over time.

The reasons for the disappearance of these precious sculptures varied according to the times. Repeated invasions resulted in many temples and artefacts being destroyed. Later, under British rule, many villagers who were primarily agriculturists were forced to leave for distant shores like Malaysia and South Africa when they could not withstand the burden of the taxes imposed on them. A lot of them could have taken the bronzes along with them, unaware of their worth. There was also the curse of colonial looting that plundered our antiquity. Independence merely brought on another kind of invasion — the invasion of Greed. Nothing changed when India proclaimed her democracy.

Indians continued to smuggle the nation's cultural heritage to distant shores where they were embraced by art collectors and the museums of the world. Here is a look at a few of the Chola antiques that we lost in the centuries that followed but were fortunately traced and reclaimed.

SAINT MANIKKAVACAKAR

There are heartwarming instances when stolen sculptures have been voluntarily returned by collectors. The Chola bronze of Saint Manikkavacakar, stolen from the Sripuranthan temple was returned by an anonymous collector to the authorities after he realised he had been given false provenance papers. If only all museums and collectors allowed their conscience to function thus!

SEMBIYAN MAHADEVI

When a three-and-a-half feet idol of Sembiyan Mahadevi, the most powerful queen of the Chola dynasty, was noticed at the Freer Gallery of Art, USA, by an Indian visitor, a complaint was made before the Velankanni police in Tamil Nadu. A detailed probe revealed that it belonged to the Kailasanatha Swamy Sivan temple close to Nagapattinam. Stone inscriptions in the temple were later deciphered and the temple staff were also interrogated. Queen Sembiyan Mahadevi who lost her husband at the age of 15 years, when her infant son was one-year-old, ruled with an emphasis on art and culture and was credited with building many temples in granite, unlike the earlier practice of building them in brick. The Freer Gallery had purchased the Chola sculpture of the queen in 1929 from an art collector, Kevorkian, in New York, who had passed away in 1962 thus rendering it impossible to know how the idol came into his possession. The Idol Wing has been making all efforts to bring her back to the temple ever since the discovery.

NATARAJA

Nataraja or the Lord of Dance was one of the most sculpted forms during the Chola period and evolved into peak perfection under their rule. One such sculpture was on display at the National Gallery of Australia (NGA). Almost 900 years old, this idol of the Dancing Shiva was found to be stolen from a temple in Tamil Nadu. It remained to be investigated to which temple it could have originally belonged to. Photographs of Nataraja sculptures were carefully examined to conclude. Despite difficulties such as the lack of clear photographs in the archives and the fact that most Nataraja idols appear to be almost identical, the experts were able to study the ring of flames around the deity and identify it as the one from the ancient Brihadeeswarar temple of Sripuranthan.

So how did this exquisite sculpture from a remote village temple in Tamil Nadu find its way across oceans to Australia hoodwinking the concerned authorities? The Sripuranthan temple had stopped being functional when the temple priest left for Chennai in the mid-1970s. Every three years as a celebration of their harvest, the idol of Kaliamman, the mother goddess, was brought by the villagers to the Nataraja temple. On one occasion, the villagers were attacked by poisonous huge hornets because of which the temple was locked and no one dared to enter it ever since. Ignorance of history made them oblivious to the value of the idol inside, making it an easy target for thieves.

The same was the case with the Nataraja idol at the 800-year-old Sundareswara temple in nearby Suthamalli. With 10 Chola idols inside, the temple was guarded by a woman who suddenly left the village with the keys and the temple remained unused. Both the temples were targeted in the stillness of the night when men came in trucks and with the rusted locks easily giving way, the idols were removed and the locks put back in place and no one was the wiser. They were then packed and made to look like cheap statues and along with fake documents, shipped out of the country. The matter came to light only because of a small slip-up by one of the thieves who, fascinated by a tiny Ganesha he found in the Suthamalli temple, grabbed it for himself despite warnings. He was soon caught during a regular police check on the highway as the tiny idol he carried aroused suspicions. With his confession, the heist was unravelled and the Chola idols were traced to museums. The kingpin, Subhash Kapoor, was arrested and thus opened Pandora's Box of the dark world of smuggling antiques. The Chola Nataraja has triumphantly returned to India and is presently at the Government Museum in Kumbakonam and only visits his land of Sripuranthan on important festival days.

SAMBANDAR

The Chola era bronze of the child-saint Sambandar was another theft that came to light recently. When the Idol Wing CID police received a complaint that the Sambandar idol was missing from the Nadanapureeswarar Sivan temple in Thanjavur, a case was registered. Images of the idol were accessed from the Indo-French Institute, Puducherry, as there were none in the temple records. Using the image, a complete search on all museum websites was undertaken. Ultimately, it was matched to an image on the Christie's auction house website. The image was downloaded and experts compared it to the image of the original taken in 1959 and found them to be the same. A formal request has been made to Christie's to return the idol and when he finally comes home, the idol would be placed back in the temple of its origin, the Nadanapureeswarar Sivan temple.

ALINGANA MURTHY

The return of this extremely beautiful Chola-era sculpture of Shiva and Parvathi from a museum in the US was largely due to the untiring efforts of a voluntary organisation called the India Pride Project. With a determined passion to bring back smuggled antiques to the country, the online volunteer group has gathered an impressive archive of Indian artworks in international museums. When they stumbled upon the Alingana Murthy, they instantly knew something was not right about its acquisition. The sculpture had a Tamil inscription at the base which was very rare but despite its rarity, surprisingly there were no records of any historian mentioning this artwork in any scholarly discussion. The museum claimed to have bought it from a well-known art collector (now deceased) but the documentation provided was quite obviously dubious. Efforts are going ahead full throttle to bring home the magnificent Alingana Murthy.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **AMPILI KISHORE KUMAR A** S/o **A. Rama Krishna**, aged about 42 years, R/at No.57/14, 1st Floor, 5th Cross, Basaveshwara Layout, Vijayanagar, Bangalore-560040, have changed my name to **AMPILI KISHORE KUMAR** vide affidavit dated: 13/5/2023 Before Notary **M.K.Devaki** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **G Deepa Kumari w/o Balaji Naidu Yanamandala,** aged about 39 years, residing at no: G-2, Shri Shirdi Sai Krupa Apartments ,Plot no:150, 4th Main Road, Sapthagiri Nagar, Hosakerehalli, BSK - 3rd Stage, Bengaluru - 560 085, I have changed my old name **G Deepa Kumari** to new name **DEEPA Yanamandala** vide affidavit dated 09.05.2023 Sworn before notary H.G.Padmanabha Rao

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ARUSHI PALLAV, aged about 18 years, D/o Pallav, R/at C-1102, Salarpuria Sendoria, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapura Road, Bangalore - 560035.
In my all documents my name is mentioned as **"ARUSHI PALLAV"**
In my Passport mentioned as **"ARUSHI"**
The above said names **"ARUSHI PALLAV"** and **"ARUSHI"** belongs to one and the same Person. vide Affidavit Dated **13/05/2023** Sworn To Before Notary **P. Nanjunda**, at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **FAIROZ PASHA,** S/o. Shaik Madar, aged 50 years, Residing at No.21, 7th Cross, Near Mukarram Masjid, Govindappa Layout, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar, R T Nagar Post, Bangalore-560032, have changed my name from **FEROZ SHAIK MADAR** (Old Name), to **FAIROZ PASHA** (New Name), vide Affidavit dated:11-05-2023, sworn before Advocate & Notary Public, **Ziaulla**, Kolar.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SHIVARAJ BASAVARAJ INDI** S/o. Basavaraj Indi, Aged about 41 years Residing at No. 835, 13th Cross, 2nd Phase, 2nd Stage, Chandra Layout, Bengaluru - 560072, Karanataka, hereby solemnly Affirm and State that My Name has been wrongly mentioned in my PAN card and my PASSBOOK records as **SHIVARAJ** Instead of **SHIVARAJ BASAVARAJ INDI**. However my name has been correctly mentioned in my Aadhar card. I declare that My correct name is **SHIVARAJ BASAVARAJ INDI** and Not SHIVARAJ. Vide affidavit dated: 06-02-2023 Before 6th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **K. RAJA MOHANAN,** Aged about 54 years, S/o. Gopalan Nair, Residing at No.S01, 2nd Floor, Vijaya Residency, 2nd Cross Road, Varanasi Main Road, Akshay Nagar, T.C. Palya, Bangalore 560 036 have changed my name from **K. KANNAN to K. RAJA MOHANAN** vide affidavit dt: 12/05/2023 sworn before advocate and notary L. Shankaranarayana, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **RUQAIYA TAQVEEN MANNA,** W/o. Abdul Jabbar A M Manna, Aged 31 years, currently residing at National Colony, Mavalli-1, Mavalli, Uttara Kannada - 581 350, KARNATAKA, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **RUKHIYA TAQVEEM MI JAVPWA / RUQAIYA TAQVEEN ABDUL JABBER** to **RUQAIYA TAQVEEN MANNA** vide affidavit dated 12.05.2023 sworn to before K.V. Mani, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **GANESH THIMMAPPA POOJARY,** previously called **GANESH.T,** S/o Late. Thimmappa Poojary, aged about 41 years, residing at No.7, 1st Floor, 8th Main, 9th Cross, Near Ambedkar Ground, Agrahara Dasarahalli, Bangalore-560 079. Hereby declare that, I have changed my name from **'GANESH.T' to "GANESH THIMMAPPA POOJARY"** vide Affidavit dated 12.05.2023, Sworn before Advocate and Notary Bharati Patil, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **NEELAMMA** W/o **SHANKARGOUD HIREGOUDAR,** R/at No.3, 1st Main, 3rd Cross, 5th Phase, 1st Stage, WOC Road, Mahaganapathi Nagar, Bengaluru-560010, have changed my name to **NEELAMMA S HIREGOUDAR** vide affidavit dated: 27/4/2023 Before Notary **Ratna.N** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **YASMIN TAJ** Aged about 39 Years, W/o Mohammed Hidayathulla, R/at No.56-C-28, 8th A Main Road, 4th Cross, BTM 1st Stage, Bangalore-560029, have changed my name to **YASMIN TAJ HIDAYATHULLA** vide affidavit dated: 12/5/2023 Before Notary **Aravind Patil G.G** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SARASWATHI** W/o Late Yellaraju, R/o No.4 Sri Renukadevi Nilaya, 2nd Cross Nanjundegowda Layout Chikkabanavara, Bengaluru – 560090, have changed my name as **SARASWATHI KRISHNAPPA**, vide affidavit dated 13.05.2023, sworn before notary Anuradha D, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SANDHIYA** D/o Ravi born on 20.04.1988 Residing at No. A005, Trend Squares Ortus II, Balaji Nagar, Amruthahalli, Bengaluru-560092 Karnataka, have changed my name (Old Name) from **SANDHIYA RAVI** to **SANDHIYA,** vide Affidavit dated 13th May 2023 before Notary **H. Sridhar Rao**, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

We, **Sri Varadaraju. K and Smt. Poornima. H, Residing at House No: 18, Tharamanakatte, Koppa Hobli, Kaudle Post, Maddur Taluk, Mandya District. We have changed our daughter's name from AMMU to AMRUTHA. V** vide affidavit dt: 25/04/2023 sworn before advocate and notary Devaraja .E, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **AKASH POOJARY**, Resident of No. # 698 J, 3rd Main Road, ITI Layout, Muneshwara Nagar, HSR Layout 7th Sector, Bommanahalli, Bengaluru - 560 068, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **POOJARY AKASH ANAND** to **AKASH POOJARY** vide affidavit dated 03.05.2023 sworn to before B. Chitra, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

We, **ANAND KSHIRSAGAR**, S/o Vithal, Aged about 48 years, **MUGDHA** W/o. Anand Kshirsagar, Aged about 46 years, # A303, Shriram Sahaana Apartment, Harohalli, Bangalore - 560 064, do hereby declare that We have changed our minor son's name from **SHRIRAM ANAND KSHIRSAGAR** to **LEO ANAND KSHIRSAGAR** vide affidavit dated 13.05.2023 sworn to before G.R. Ravichandra Reddy, Advocate & Notary, Government of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SUNIL DESHPANDE,** aged about 43 years, S/o Sri. Bhimsain Rao Kishan Rao Deshpande, residing at L-1448, Blue Block, 14th Floor, Brigade Lakefront, Seetharampalya, EPIP Zone, Whitefield, Hoodi, Bangalore-560 048. I state that, my daughter's (aged 15 years) name **'SHRIYA' & 'SHRIYA DESHPANDE'** are one & the same and hereinafter my daughter's name will be called as **'SHRIYA DESHPANDE'** vide Affidavit dated 12.05.2023, sworn before Advocate and Notary Chandrashekaraiah.S, Bengaluru.

> *It need not be that I should act and produce. I am okay to bankroll projects for other actors and directors as long as they have a good story to tell*
>
> Radhika Kumaraswamy, actor-producer

I picked up *Ajagrata* only for my brother's sake: Radhika Kumaraswamy

The actor talked about her absence on the silver screen, her desire to be involved in various aspects of filmmaking, and her eagerness to work on back-to-back projects

A SHARADHAA

Radhika Kumaraswamy has been noticeably absent from the silver screen, and even her recent release, Ravichandran's *Ravi Bopanna* (2022) was a project she finished filming years ago. Currently, she is waiting for the release of *Bhairadevi*, a movie made under her production venture (Shamika Productions), and has now finally signed another project after a year-long break.

Titled *Ajagrata*, this multilingual film, directed by M Shashidhar, is made in seven languages. *Ajagrata* also stars Shreyas Talpade, who makes his South Indian debut with this film, which was launched in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Speaking to *CE* on the sidelines of the event, Radhika shared that she picked Ajagrata only for the sake of her brother, Raviraj, who is producing the film. "I didn't want to accept any film until *Bhairadevi* was released. In fact, I did get offers from the Malayalam industry too but I had to let go of them because I was hell-bent on releasing my film first before taking up any other project. Incidentally, my brother was producing Shashidhar's next, and I was kept involved in the proceedings of the film. He was constantly telling me that they couldn't zero in on a heroine. I suggested a few names but none fit the bill. I saw his struggle to find the leading lady and when I came into the picture, he was more than happy to have me on board," says Radhika who added that the project will also put a full stop to the rumours about her being away from the industry. "I was glad to come in support of my brother. Moreover, *Ajagrata* will be out in the theatres only after *Bhairadevi*," she says.

Radhika says that she would keenly observe director Shashidhar's working pattern during his discussion session with her brother and understood that he had a passion for filmmaking. "When I got into the project, I had asked for the bound story along with dialogues, and it was submitted to me in a day's time by the director. He has conceived a good subject, which is 'content-oriented', with commercial elements and has a message too. I watched the director's debut, *Garga*, and his first attempt has been good. He has significantly improved *Ajagrata* after I joined the project, particularly with the songs and the way he plans to present the film," says Radhika.

Going forward, Radhika has decided to work on back-to-back projects. "Apart from *Ajagrata* and *Bhairadevi*, I am also in the process of getting ready for another project. The story is getting ready, and an announcement will be made once I have a film release," says Radhika, who is planning to bring in more variety of films under her production banner. "It need not be that I should act and produce. I am okay to bankroll projects for other actors and directors as long as they have a good story to tell."

As an actor and producer, Radhika likes to have a hands-on approach to every department of cinema. "I like getting involved in every department, but I do have a better comfort level as an actor. A producer holds a responsible job but it comes with a little tension." When asked how updated she is about today's cinema, Radhika cites the example of *Ajagrata*. "It is a simple story, and more focus has been given on the making, which has been the case of today's films," she says.

Ajagrata will be shot and released simultaneously in seven languages including Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Hindi, Konkani, and Marathi.

The film also stars Samuthirakani, Jayaprakash, Sparsha Rekha, Devaraj, Suchendra Prasad, and Vinay Prasad. With music by Shrihari, Sandeep Valluri is on board as the cinematographer.

More films like *The Kerala Story* need to come to light: Vijay Krishna

CE FEATURES

The Kerala Story has been the current hot topic of conversation, and **Vijay Krishna**, who plays one of the antagonists, is ecstatic about the response from the audience. As a theatre artist, Vijay started his film career with Mansore's *Act 1978* and has also appeared in the Kannada web series *Kyabre*, and *Avrodh*. Despite having numerous offers to play various characters, Vijay prefers to star in realistic films. "I have worked as a theatre artist for over 15 years. At this moment, I prefer doing realistic films, and it feels amazing to be part of a project like *The Kerala Story*," says Vijay.

While the film was critically panned, and faced bans in multiple states, Vijay believes that the film owes its success to the audience's reception. "If the film is good, it will be discussed, and there will be a positive word of mouth. So I feel it has really so much to do with the viewers," Vijay says. Recalling a recent experience where he watched *The Kerala Story* with his partner in Mumbai, Vijay says, "I was wearing a mask so that people don't recognise me. My partner at one point couldn't even touch me because I play a strange character. She couldn't look at me at first, and I completely understood. After some time, I saw her holding hands with another lady, sitting next to us, and weeping. That is the impact the film is creating. Also, I am receiving deep-rooted hatred from sections of the audience after seeing the film. I see it as a testament to my performance. I am happy to get such comments," he says.

According to Vijay, the human interest story of *The Kerala Story* has captivated the audience. "It is about the abuse that women are going through, and some of the men are probably putting them through. I don't believe it is about particular religions. It is about these women and their horrifying experiences. More of these kinds of stories need to come to light. I understand that these films will be part of controversies, but that's part of the industry," he says.

Vijay continues to choose characters that are completely different from each other. "I want to be part of varied roles as much as I can, and in different industries. Basically, I follow work and am looking to be part of Telugu and Tamil films. Right now, I have another project in Kannada and am waiting for the production house to officially announce it," he concludes.

ARJUN GOWDA TO MAKE HIS TELUGU DEBUT WITH *HAROM HARA*

CE FEATURES

Arjun Gowda, who established himself in Kannada films with impactful performances in *Rustum*, *Odeya*, *Aa Drishya*, *Ekalvya*, and *Rider*, is set to make his Telugu debut with Gnanasagaar Dwaraka's *Harom Hara*. Starring Sudheer Babu as the lead, the film has Arjun Gowda playing the main antagonist. The actor, who has completed six days of shoot, shared his look from the film. "This is just my start in Telugu. There are much more to come, and in multiple languages too," says Arjun, adding, "I am following the path once followed by Prakash Raj."

Arjun is glad that filmmakers from other industries are exposed to the talent pool in Kannada. "Thanks to films like *KGF* and *Kantara*, actors like us have been receiving a lot of respect in other languages, and it is welcoming," he says. According to Arjun, *Harom Hara* is an action drama, which is set in the 80s. "It is the story of an ordinary man, who loses his job, finds himself in financial troubles, and gets into an illegal weapon manufacturing business. How the protagonist goes on to become a bigwig in this world is the one line of *Haram Hara*," explains Arjun.

The film has music by Chaitam Bharadwaj, and the cinematography is by Aravind Vishwanathan.

Origin Of The Species adds Ana De Armas, Jude Law to its cast

CE FEATURES

Origin of the Species, Ron Howard's survival thriller has added Ana De Armas, Jude Law, Alicia Vikander, and Daniel Brühl in lead roles. Imagine Entertainment, the filmmaker's production house is backing the project along with CAA Media Finance and Stuart Ford's AGC Studios. Noah Pink will be penning the script for the film.

The production of *Origin of the Species* is said to begin in Queensland, Australia towards the end of 2023. The film is being described as an "erotic and darkly comic tale of murder and survival, set around a group of eclectic characters who abandon civilization for the Galapagos," and is based on two different accounts of the same true story.

An Oscar-winner, Ron Howard last helmed *Thirteen Lives*, the Amazon Thai cave rescue thriller. The film starred Viggo Mortensen, Colin Farrell, and Joel Edgerton.

Brandon Perea joins the cast of *Twisters*

CE FEATURES

Nope fame star Brandon Perea has joined the cast of the upcoming *Twister* sequel titled *Twisters*. The makers have announced Anthony Ramos as the latest actor to join the cast.

The filmmakers have already announced that Daisy Edgar-Jones and Glen Powell are a part of the film's cast. With the script penned by Mark L Smith, the reboot is helmed by Lee Isaac Chung. The film is set to hit the theatres on July 19, 2024. *Twister* revolved around storm-chasers as they ran after the most powerful tornados. However, the plot of the new film is kept under wraps. The original *Twister* starred Helen Hunt, Bill Paxton, Carey Elwes and Philip Seymour Hoffman, among others.

Twisters is backed by Warner Bros Pictures along with Frank Marshall and Pat Crowley.